



On The Fly

RESPONSIBLE TO, FOR, AND WITH EACH OTHER

by Ken Hofmeister, Pres. SFF

A recent trip on the Withlacoochee River reminded us that our sport does have some perils and hazards. In this case, it involved some tough portages and slow slogging through shallow grassy water. One participant, upon arriving at the lunch site, exclaimed that he had “completed ranger training.”

We face other challenges as we practice our sport. Gators were abundant in the Everglades trip, we live in the lightning capital of the USA, and dermatologists make a good living off fisherman. Mosquitoes irritate and infect us, snakes slither around our favorite spots. Stingrays can do serious damage--as we so recently discovered. Since some of us venture forth in kayaks, canoes, and other small craft, there is always the fast moving storm that can swamp us.

Sharks are around and have been known to take a bite out of our catch. Then, there is the dock piling, channel marker, and crab trap that waits for some boater. How about fishhooks in the flesh? A survey of members would indicate that many have experienced this unpleasant threat. Fish do have teeth, gills, and sharp spines. Who has not been punctured, cut or bitten?

If we are to be responsible to, for, and with each other there are a few common sense things that we can do as individuals and as a club to prevent and respond to these unfortunate facts of fishing life. We can use a buddy system and establish clear communication guidelines. Naturally, as Alan reminds us, we can have all the necessary safety equipment on our boats at night. This means proper lighting, flares, personal flotation devices, etc. Coast Guard Captain’s course reminded me that a fire extinguisher and flares should be current.

A first aid kit doesn’t take up much room, and small whistles fit in a pocket. Mosquito repellent helps. Norm was

showing me how to tie a fly and he stressed mashing the barb. I thought it was for conservation purposes and then realized that it’s much easier to remove a hook with no barb from your hide!

We’ll let the physicians talk to us about precaution; however, a current tetanus shot is essential and sunscreen with a rating of above 15 is pretty important. My dermatologist said a hat was a great idea. Pat Damico stresses good Polaroid glasses with side coverage and ultra violet protection.

“Handle with care” is a good idea for dealing with our catch. Each of us has a favorite method. Find and use what works best. Pliers and hemostats help. The stingray shuffle works--most of the time. Be prepared for the possibility that it won’t.

Finally, there is no substitute for good judgment! Let’s keep reminding each other to be safe.

August Outing Review

by Richard Oldenski

Anyone who survived the outing on the wild Withlacoochee River deserves a medal for valor and fitness. Contrary to earlier scouting reports, the four-hour trip actually took six hours and the river was loaded with obstacles and cotton mouths. Multiple fallen trees required skilled canoe paddling and physical stamina. At one

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point, a complete impasse in the river had us portaging our canoes 40 yards through the forest, climbing up and down steep, slippery slopes of clay. The fishing was fantastic. These wild fish had never seen a foam spider, and they were ferociously eager to taste them. It was fun! We only wish we were able to spend more time fishing and less time maneuvering the river. The outing prize goes to Mark Hays for a 12-inch bass. Ken Hofmeister scored in the tournament with a 10-inch sunfish. After a long hard "paddling" on the river, we enjoyed a tasty chicken dinner. You should have been there!

THIS MONTH'S OUTING SEPT. 23, 2006

By Richard Oldenski

Please note the location change to Double Branch

With Red Tide threatening the Gulf passes, we will move our September outing to Double Branch Creek at the inner most edge of Tampa Bay. Upper Tampa Bay Park provides access for waders, canoes and kayaks to Double Branch Creek. Double Branch Bay and Mobley Bay. This area of tidal flow through mangrove islands and oyster bars provides a habitat for snook, redfish and

trout. To get there, take Route 580 to Oldsmar. After you pass Race Track Road, look for Double Branch Road on the right and follow it to the park. Those who prefer to fish by boat can launch from the Courtney Campbell Causeway and fish the outer edge of Double Branch Bay. The park gates open at 7:00 AM and lunch will be served at the picnic area near the canoe launch at Noon. Please sign up and get a map at the September meeting.

OUTING PREVIEWS:

October - Carl Hanson Tournament at the Hillsborough River

November - Lake Pasadena

December - Don Coleman Classic at Ft. Desoto

FISHING TOURNAMENT

Bass - Don Manning - 17 inches

Sunfish - Ken Hofmeister - 10 inches

Snook - Ken Doty - 22 ½ inches

Trout - Siobhan Archard - 15 inches

Open Category - Ken Doty - 22 inch Ladyfish

SFF TRIP WITHLACOOCHI *by Mark Hays*

Not being an official "Rick's Ranger", I am not qualified to comment on the August assault on the Withlacoochee River. Rick's Rangers are the hearty and ragged souls who challenged the river from High Bluffs to the appointed take out. Weenies such as myself and Ken Doty who launched at the take out point and timidly explored the river do not qualify.

This article is not intended to detail the pleasures and pains of the full trip; only to make some observations. I must say that never have I seen so many broken fly rods at one time! It seems that too many and too nice of rods were taken on this excursion. Remember that sweet little rod that Ken Hofmeister spoke so highly of in the last newsletter? You should have heard what she was calling him by trip's end. The point I'm making is that canoes, rivers and unknown waters are not the place for nice tackle.

Annie and I were fortunate enough to have done this kind of trip before. We carried only enough flies and spare leader to fit in my pocket along with very old, short rods. Had we lost any of our tackle it would have been fun replacing it at discount stores or yard sales.

Since everyone survived and will certainly have many stories to tell, I hope we can try this trip again, only with cheaper rods and more advanced scouting of the river. My fondest memory of this trip will surely be a quote from Don Manning as he negotiated the last bend towards the landing: "Who the hell's idea was this, anyway?"

If your life is missing that extra little excitement, then join us next month. Provided you survive the mangrove swamp and mud flats, there will still be my special lunch to test your constitution at the end of the day. Oh, and remember, don't bring your best rod.

WEAKFISHING OFF THE JERSEY COAST

by Peter G. Cole

Hello to all my friends in the Suncoast Fly Fishers. I thought you might like the enclosed.



Peter with 10.5 lb. Weakfish Photo by Peter G. Cole

It was caught at 10:30 pm May 17th, in the back of Jarvis Sound (Wildwood, NJ) on a chartreuse streamer fly on my 6 weight. It weighed 10.5 lbs! I had no idea it was a Weakfish (male) until it was netted. The fish played heavy with little inclination to come to the boat or run further away. It was probably some 30 yards off the back of my friends flats boat. When it eventually did move it made for the outboard motor and then attempted to go under the boat towards the trolling motor. I'm glad to say that by fluke or skill I managed to keep it away from those obstacles and even though the two of us had to squeeze by each other, in another anxious moment, the fish was successfully netted. Now, the netting had its own excitement as the fish had its head sticking right through the bottom of the net. I guess I got lucky! I will be back the end of November, so I'll have to fish in the December Fort Desoto meeting.

SFF SHIRTS

Alan still has a few (very few) of the new club tee shirts for sale but you better see him soon if you want one. A bargain at \$13.00 each. See Alan at the meeting.

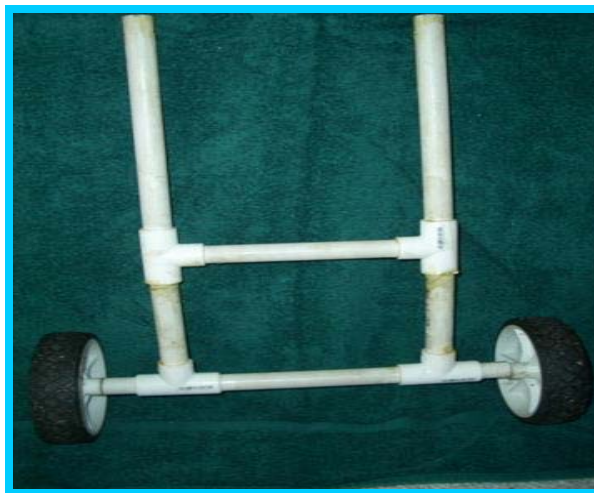
Kayak Wheels

By Ted Rich

Some members have expressed an interest or curiosity in the wheels for my Wilderness Systems 160 sit-on kayak. As we get older, our canoes and kayaks seem to get heavier. It might be time to consider one of the two types of carriers for your boat.

There are a number of manufacturers selling carriers for canoes and kayaks. The most common type carrier for canoes and kayaks consists of a small platform with wheels where the boat is placed on top of the platform and secured with bungee cords or straps. These carriers work fairly well but can be a problem on rough terrain if the securing straps allow the boat to shift and then the wheels become misaligned with the boat. If this happens, you end up dragging the wheels when you pull the boat.

If you have a sit-on kayak you have the option of using the platform carrier mentioned or the sit-on kayak with vertical holes through the hull offers another transportation option. Rugged metal carriers made for specific boats that fit in the vertical holes can be purchased but they are not cheap. Or you could design and build a carrier for your boat. Simple "H" shaped pipes with wheels on the bottom provide a small and inexpensive method of transporting the boat.



Kayak Dolly Photo Ted Rich

I used Schedule 40 PVC pipe for the frame and the wheels and axle are from an old Weber grill. You should use the largest diameter pipe you can for added strength (if you are restricted to small pipe because of the size of the vertical holes, it can be strengthened by gluing reinforcing rods inside your PVC pipes). Larger wheels will provide better tracking in sand or on rough terrain. The "H" shaped unit provides a small inexpensive device that can be stowed in the kayak and works great on rough terrain, provided it is built sturdily.

A Successful Guided Fly Trip Begins With... by Capt. Pat Damico

Once or twice a week I have phone conversations with several guide friends who specialize in fly fishing. We share information about our most recent trips. After discussing the type and number of fish, where they were located, tide and weather conditions, moon phase, water temperature, the number of fish brought to the boat comes up. The client is then described as part of the answer. "The guy was a pleasure to be with, he didn't listen to a single thing I told him, he kept telling me about his other successful trips, a real jerk, I took him back early, I spent most of the day giving him casting lessons, I made every cast for him, he hooked me twice," etc. The movie, "A River Runs Through It," has spawned a new breed of "fly fishers," who ply the water in search of the many rewards of the sport. Experienced clients who we have never met are also anxious to put a few notches on their fly rods with a successful saltwater trip. As guides, we are supposed to be a part of the learning process. How can we make a clients trip an experience that they will enjoy?

My friends would all agree that success or failure will depend primarily on one thing, casting ability. All factors being equal, the person who can cast well will be successful. Eight hours is a long time to spend on a flats boat with someone who has poor casting skills. Can a person not cast well and be a successful fly fisherman? I guess that depends on how you define success. If success means catching fish, read on.

I recently fished a trophy trout stream in northeastern Pennsylvania that was loaded with healthy, native trout. The stretch of water was limited to fly fishing only, from the bank, in very clear and for the most part relatively shallow water. The urban setting means that every day, all year long, these fish are bombarded with flies by some very astute anglers. The catch and release regulations mean that these fish have been caught many times. Are they difficult? They are for the most part, impossible

I always advise doing a little research before doing any casting. I've spent many years fishing for freshwater trout so I gathered information from some friends who are frequent visitors, as well as from a few of the local experts. I saw a few fish caught and these are some of the requirements for success Six X, nine foot leaders with seven, or eight X, two to three foot tippets were used. Flies as small as size twenty-six, and twenty-eight were common. Some Tricos, were

hatching and these were what was needed to successfully match the hatch. Many of the trout would sip these small natural morsels, refusing an imitation that was a little too large, the wrong color, had a floating leader, or exhibited a hint of unnatural drag. Many fish were caught within a few feet of the bank.

As a certified casting instructor, the casting skills needed for this type of fishing blew my mind. Very few fisherman had more than two or three feet of fly line extending past the tip of their eight and a half or nine foot, four or five weight fly rod. Imagine doing this every trip and catching fish. Here we have a fly fisherman who has great skill in stream entomology, stealth, presentation and remarkable fly tying skills and consistently catches fish with only a few feet of fly line past the fly rod tip, using a very long fragile leader. The technique



could be called "high sticking," or "dabbling." Casting skill is almost nonexistent. He is however, in the eyes of his peers, a master fly fisherman.

Contrast this to a June trip scheduled to catch one hundred pound plus tarpon along our beaches where a twelve weight nine foot fly rod with a weight forward line attached to a 3/0 fly will have to be cast a minimum of fifty feet, quickly and accurately, usually in the wind, to a moving fish, with a minimum of false casting. I realize I am using two extreme examples, but they both are factual and do exist. If I take one of my best saltwater clients and put him in the above freshwater situation, what will his success rate be? Not very good Which is harder? They are both difficult, and herein lies the allure of fly fishing. If you want diversity, a challenge, a never ending learning curve, you picked the right sport. The successful freshwater angler will be a disaster in the salt. And this is the situation we frequently have to deal with.

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Get as much information before your trip into a different fishing environment and come prepared. Do your homework and be honest about your skills and experience. Your fly rod must be thought of as an instrument. An instrument performs only as well as the person holding it, and require hours of practice. Get some help from someone who is knowledgeable, do your homework, duplicate the fishing situation before you arrive, and you will have a successful trip.

Capt. Pat Damico, a FFF Certified Fly Casting Instructor, can be reached via his website www.captpat.com, or by calling 727-504-8649.

This article originally appear on the Capt. Mel Berman website and is reprinted here with the permission of the author.

SFF MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Just a timely reminder SFF members, your 2007 membership renewals are due next month. Joe Bolesina, our club treasurer has generously offered to accept your dues a month early. Let's make Joe's job a littler easier this year by getting our dues paid on time. Regular membership is only \$25.00 and family memberships a bargain at \$35.00. Please see Joe at the meeting.....(ps ed)

CCA ALL PHOTO ALL RELEASE

TOURNAMENT Sept. 22 & 23, 2006

This is your last chance to sign up for this terrific event and this year it is being held in our own backyard — Tampa Bay watch Headquarters and Ft. DeSoto. Lots of good food, prizes, free tackle and your 2007 CCA membership. See Alan Sewell or Robert Fischer at the meeting...(ps ed.)

EDITOR'S CORNER *by Paul Sequira*

Last month we delivered the first of our new electronic version of "On The Fly" and if the feedback I have received from many of the members is any indication, most of you are very happy with it. I'd like to extend my thanks to those of you who have taken the time to compliment me on my efforts to produce an entertaining and informative newsletter for you.

I'd also like to thank the members who have been submitting articles for the newsletter. Input from the members is vital to the success of any newsletter so keep them coming. If your article isn't used immediately, it doesn't mean that it won't be used, I'll get to it eventually. It takes some effort to put the newsletter together and fit everything in. Be assured that I appreciate every contribution.

I can accept documents in several formats but the easiest format for me to handle is MS Word. MS Works is also acceptable and of course RTF or HTML. Please send pictures in JPG format and try to keep them under 150 KB

If there is some feature that you'd like to see covered in the newsletter, let me know about it. We'll see what we can do.

Send your articles to me at: psequira@tampabay.rr.com

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

September — Cobia, shark, drum & tarpon fishing on the fly rod with Pauly Mahorny
October — Capt. Rod Walinchus, guide, author, illustrator & fly fisher
November — We're working on it
December — Happy Holidays, no meeting

LOCAL FLY FISHING GUIDES

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

Capt. Mike Homer--Tampa Bay; 727/418-5005

Cap. Ray Markham-----Sarasota & Tampa Bay
941/723-2655

Ken Doty's Snook Fly

Lefty Kreh once said something to the effect that a good fly not only catches fish; but it should take only a few minutes to tie. Ken Doty's Snook Fly certainly meets those requirements. This simple fly is easy to tie, uses only three readily available materials and catches fish with the best of them. In fact, it is one of the best night snook flies I know of.



Ken's Snook Fly tied by Ken Doty

Materials:

- Hook: Mustad 3407 (or similar) sizes #1 or #2
- Thread: 3/0 white flat waxed nylon
- Tail: 2 white saddle hackles
- Wing: 3 clumps of white marabou
- Flash: pearl flashabou

Tying Directions:

- 1) Start thread slightly behind hook eye and wind to hook bend
- 2) Match one pair of white saddle hackles with curvature facing inward and measure to twice the length of the hook. Remove the excess fibers and tie in by the butts on top of the hook shank at the start of the bend. Secure the hackle stems with several thread wraps; cut and discard excess hackle stems.
- 3) Select a small bunch of white marabou fibers about the thickness of a wooden matchstick. Place them a short distance ahead of the tail tie-in point and secure them to the top of the hook shank with several wraps of thread. The marabou fiber tips should extend to half the length of the tail. Cut and discard the excess marabou fibers.
- 4) Select 3 strands of pearl flashabou, place on side of hook shank at marabou tie-in point and secure with several thread wraps. Take several wraps around the hook shank with the long end of the flashabou, take to opposite side of the hook and secure them with several thread wraps. Cut the flashabou even with the length of the marabou on both sides of the hook.
- 5) Repeat steps #3 and #4 with a second bunch of marabou and flashabou leaving a small space between the two bunches. Repeat once more with a third bunch of marabou and flashabou.
- 6) Wrap a neat thread head and whip finish. Finish with several coats of head cement.

Ken Doty's Snook Fly is a fly you can fish with confidence, spotted sea trout, redbfish and ladyfish love it too.

Gartside's Gurgler

Jack Gartside is the originator of the Gurgler, there are several variations of this excellent fly and regardless of minor differences they are all effective. The Gurgler is a simple fly designed to imitate surface bait. It is neither a popper nor a slider rather, a very effective in-between type of fly, a surface commotion pattern. The following is the original Gurgler dressing, which can be tied on either a long (for toothy critters) or standard shank hook. When tied on the long shank hook, all of the materials are tied on the forward half of the hook shank, leaving the rear half bare to protect it from sharp teeth. This fly has proven to be an excellent choice when shrimp are skipping on the surface.

Materials:

- Hook: Mustad 3407 or 34011 (long shank) sizes 4 – 2/0
- Thread: White 3/0 or monochord
- Tail: Very sparse white bucktail or marabou plumes (full) overlaid with 5 or 6 strands of pearl flashabou
- Body: White closed-cell foam, forming 5 equal segments. Foam should be 1/2" to 3/4" wide depending on hook size. Use foam at least 1/8" thick
- Rib: White or grizzly saddle hackle palmered between body segments
- Carapace (or shellback): Closed-cell foam pulled over the body. Trim foam leaving an excess about 3/8" (+/-) protruding beyond hook eye

Directions:

Attach thread just behind hook eye and wind back about half way for long shank hook or about three quarters of the way for regular shank hook. At the termination of the thread wrap, tie in a very sparse tail of bucktail or a full bunch of marabou plumes. The tail should be about 1 1/2 times the shank length. Leave the remainder of the shank bare.

Tie in a 6" length of five or six strands of pearl flashabou at base of tail – tie them in at the mid point so that half is forward of the thread wraps and half is to the rear. Now bring the forward strands back over the tail and take a couple of thread wraps to secure them.



Gartside's Gurglers tied by Paul sequira

Cut a strip of foam about 4" or 5" long and 1/2" (+/-) wide and place flat on top of the hook shank. The body and shell will be formed from this ONE piece of foam. Tie in so that the front of the foam ends just short of the hook eye with about 2" to 3" extending over the tail.

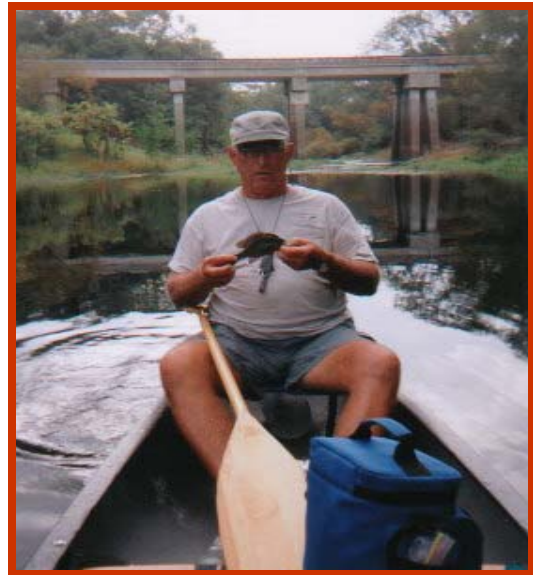
With the tying thread, make five evenly spaced segments, cupping the foam around the hook shank as you wind the thread forward. Now wind the thread back to the starting point in between the segments.

Strip the fibers from one side of a saddle hackle and tie it in by the tip at the rear of the end segment. Advance the thread forward once more in between the foam segments to the hook eye. Palmer the hackle forward between the segments and tie down at the eye. Trim and discard excess hackle.

Bring the foam over the top of the body and tie down just behind the eye. Bring the loose strips of flashabou over the carapace and secure them with thread at the foam tie in point. Trim the excess flashabou and whip finish a small head under the foam lip.

Trim the excess foam leaving a lip extending over the hook eye approximately 1/4" to 1/2" long. You may trim the lip round this will help reduce the fly from spinning while casting, or just leave it straight.

SFF's Trip On The Withlacoochie August 19, 2006



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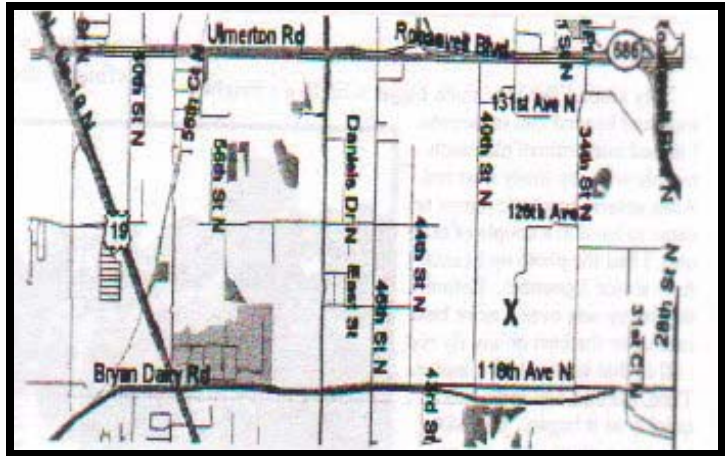
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“**On The Fly**” is the monthly newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers (SFF), a not for profit organization offering fly fishing and fly tying instructions to members and visitors. Club membership includes subscription. Send e-mail submissions to psequira@tampabay.rr.com



Next Meeting: September 15, 2006

Time: 6:30—7:00 pm Activities, 7:00-9:00 pm Meeting

Location: Wyoming Antelope Club
3700 126th Ave. N. St. Petersburg

Program: Pauly Mahorny—Cobia, snook, drum, tarpon on the fly rod

WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.SUNCOASTFLYFISHERS.COM

On The Fly

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