

# On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg

Our new club website is up and running. Read all about it. Pages 4-5-6



Tim Elms: June outing snook. Pp8, 11-12



Mark Hays' docklight redfish. P10



Docklight/Beach panel Tips. Pp13-14



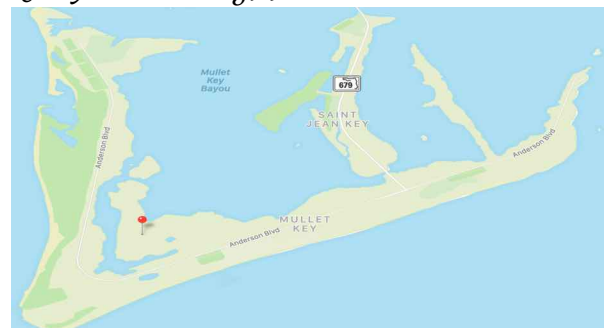
How low can you go, Ted Rich? P17

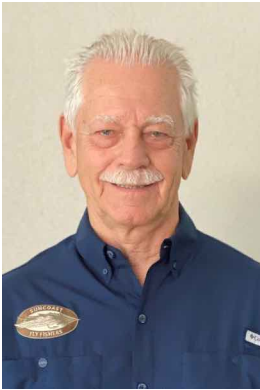


Robert Fischer fly fishes Maine. P16



July 18 Outing, Fort Desoto Park. P9





## *President's Letter*

July, 2020

Suncoast Fly Fishers,

This month I am extremely pleased to announce that SFF has launched a brand new website, <https://suncoastflyfishers.com/>.

Our old site had become outdated and difficult to maintain. Our goal was to fix these problems and create a contemporary website for members and visitors alike.

What we got is truly amazing. The site looks great and it is going to be your best source for anything you want to know about Suncoast Fly Fishers. I personally believe it is one of the **most outstanding** websites you will ever visit. Please take a look and come back often because the site is continually being updated with new content and new features.

Our timing couldn't be better. In the days of stay at home orders and social distancing we need new and better ways to stay connected. Last month we started posting content on the internet. Our June Dock Light panel and fly tying videos have become very popular on the SFF Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/scff2020>

Watch for something new on SFF Virtual Monday each week at 7:00pm. For those of you who have not necessarily embraced social media, myself included, watch for SFF on YouTube.

This month we are again going to have a "virtual" outing. Fishing will be at Fort DeSoto Park, but we will not be gathering for lunch. If members plan to meet or fish together, please observe best practices for social distancing and face coverings. You can report your catches to the outings committee.

We are going to have our regular monthly meeting on ZOOM video conference. Our featured speakers will be Dennis Marquis and Tim Elms talking about what else? Our new website!

Thanks again for a fantastic job.

*Rick*

Rick Warfel  
SFF President

## Meetings, Outings, and More

### **See you on ZOOM**

#### **July meeting, Thursday, July 16**

We can't meet in person but we can meet online. Join the meeting at 7:00 pm using the ZOOM video conference application. We will hold a brief business meeting then Dennis Marquis and Tim Elms will talk to us about our new club website which they designed. And check out features of the new website on pages 4-6.

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### **See you at Fort DeSoto Park**

#### **July outing, Saturday, July 18**

Bad news, good news. We're not getting together for a picnic lunch. BC of Covid 19. But it's not going to stop us from fishing. The location is Fort DeSoto Park.

- Fish anywhere in or around Fort DeSoto Park on July 18. Fish any part of or the whole day.
  - There will be prizes for the longest snook, the longest redfish, and the longest seatrout. Measure and email photos of your fish to [robertburkard9@gmail.com](mailto:robertburkard9@gmail.com)
  - That goes for the annual tournament. Reds, seatrout, snook, ladyfish. Measure and email pictures to [robertburkard9@gmail.com](mailto:robertburkard9@gmail.com)
- 

### **Hangout on Facebook every Monday at 7 PM**

Go to our club's Facebook page every Monday at 7:30 pm and you'll see a club presentation on one or more topics. So far we have done the Docklight Panel and fly tying videos by Bruce Evensen on Facebook. Watch for the fly of the month: Pin Fish (July), Bendback (August), Baitfish pattern (September), Spider/shrimp (October), Hannukah Fly (November). December fly? It'll be something colorful. The plan is to introduce new fly fishing experts to the club to share their insights. President Rick Warfel said he also wants to expand the platforms that are used to make the content more accessible to the members. One possible example may be to post video content on YouTube.

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### **Docklight-Beach Fishing Panel was a big success**

The panel with members Alan Sewell and Mike Larkin plus Captains Lisa Lowman and Court Douthit was very successful. More than 400 have watched it. It aired on Facebook Live on June 18<sup>th</sup>. And it's still there. If you haven't watched it, do it. [Facebook.com/scff2020](https://www.facebook.com/scff2020) Also, Duane Mertz has taken the time to write about the techniques that our experts shared. Read his article in this issue on pages 13-14.

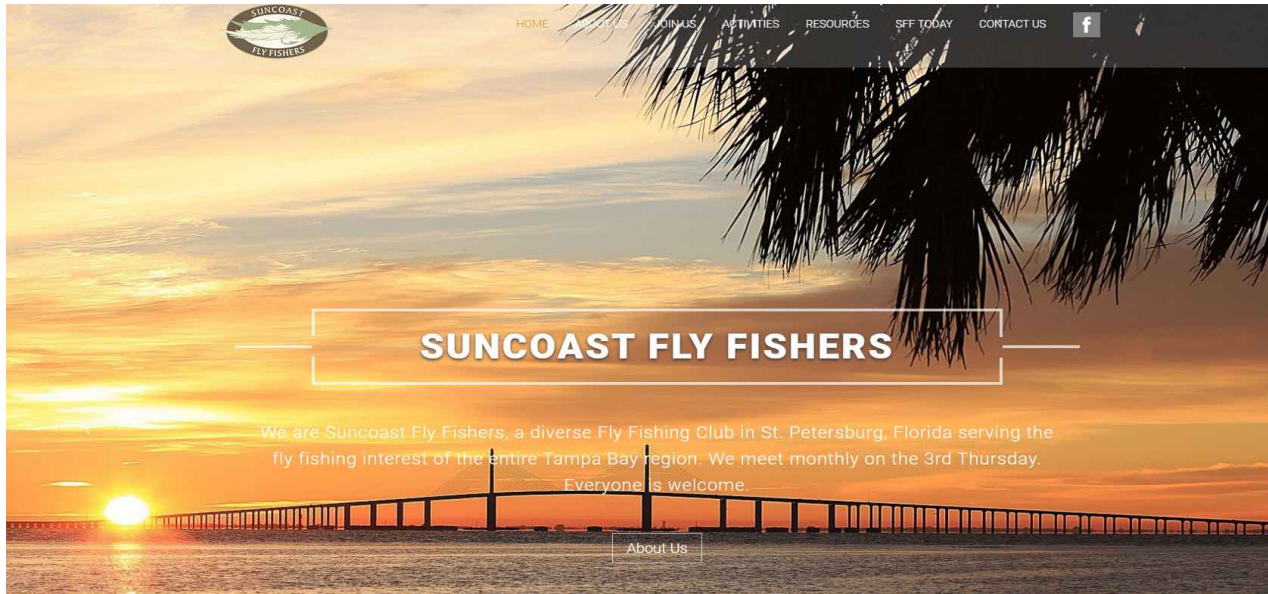
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### **Put on your thinking cap**

A continuing club objective is to have money in the checkbook to reward members with goodies like free guide trip raffles. Ah, but, that virus that goes by different names made us cancel our big annual fund raiser, the Hog Roast. Therefore, the board of directors has been discussing ways to raise some money. On the table are possibilities like an online auction and/or a silent auction at the Christmas Party.

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The Board of the **Suncoast Fly Fishers (SFF)** club  
announces its newly revised website!  
[www.suncoastflyfishers.com](http://www.suncoastflyfishers.com)



This new eye catching, state of the art and exciting website is built using WordPress and hosted by Bluehost. You can access the site with any browser on any device! It's all seamless. The Board is extremely excited and encourages you to use it often.

The best part is the site will no longer be static. Content and events will all be updated regularly so keep coming back and checking out what's going on now and what's to come with our club. During this time of social distancing we hope this site brings us closer to each other.

The site provides access to many FUN features all on one main page such as:

- Our **SFF Today** -- Our new way of providing easy access to the President's message, the most recent newsletter and up to date news and notifications
- **Activities and Resources** -- This section contains one click access to monthly meeting and outing information, our amazing new fly tying library and the complete newsletter archive
- Keep Scrolling down to **Most Recent Catches** -- where we highlight some of your recent trophies
- The site contains easily found links to the FFI website and our SFF club Facebook page
- Our sponsors will appreciate the nifty scrolling region highlighting their logos with direct access to their websites
- Still being finalized is our new **Meet the Officers** Call out.
- Also, we will begin to incorporate an on-line membership application, member login feature, and e-commerce ability to pay for membership, hog roast tickets, etc., all directly from the site.

*Continued on next page*



ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES



OUR EVENT CALENDAR

SFF offers a full variety of activities, including monthly meetings, fishing outings, casting instructions, fly tying, annual dinner, volunteer opportunities and additional fun stuff.

[Click Here >](#)



VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

SFF has a long-standing tradition of outreach to publicize the benefits of fly-fishing and our club, as well as, giving back to the community in the form of volunteer opportunities.

[Click Here >](#)



MONTHLY MEETINGS AND OUTINGS

Our meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month(except December) at Walter Fuller Recreation Center, 7891 26th Ave N, St. Petersburg, FL @ 6:00 pm

[Click Here >](#)



FLY CASTING

Want to learn how to cast? We practice and help each other every month before meetings!

[Click Here >](#)



"ON THE FLY"

On The Fly is our monthly newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers (SFF). We are proud of this monthly publication.



FLY ARCHIVE

Read about the featured flies of the month and search the complete fly archive.



LOCAL GUIDES

Local guides that support SFF. Be sure to check out our friends and support them back.



WE ARE A PROUD CHARTER MEMBER OF FFI

Fly Fishers International (FFI) is dedicated, through education and conservation, to preserving

Here's a little history about how we got to where we are today:

The Board approved the initiation of the website rebuild project in June of 2019. At that time, the club hired Craig Smothers, owner/operator of Saltflys.com out of Sarasota, to work with SFF club member Dennis Marquis to setup and create the proof of concept model using Bluehost as our host and WordPress as the site development environment.

Dick Miekka, long standing member, who supported the original website, deserves many thanks as Dick patiently met with Dennis early in the project, so that we could understand how to migrate important content like photos, newsletters and fly tying archives from the older environment into the new one.

Fast-forward to earlier this year when newer member Tim Elms volunteered to partner with Dennis for styling and design. Tim understood Dennis had created all the content and databases but saw in the newsletter that Dennis was looking for help with design and the two of them came up with a plan. In a couple of weeks they created an amazing new look. They will continue to care and feed the website with the needed blog updates, articles, pictures, events and more.

*Continued on next page*

## P3/Our New Website

A big thanks also goes to Bill Au Coin, On The Fly editor, who collaborated with the team to make it easier to integrate newsletter content more seamlessly into the new site.

The new site is one we all can be proud of as club members. It will be the example other clubs try to follow. GO NOW AND CHECK IT OUT!

**SFF Update with Coronavirus**  
Posted in [Corona Virus Updates](#) by [marquod59](#) on [June 27, 2020](#)

The Corona virus has had a big effect on the club and the way we do business. Most events, meetings and outings have been canceled or drastically altered. Check here for future updates!

[Click Here »](#)

**Latest from our President June 2020**  
Posted in [President's Message](#) by [marquod59](#) on [June 18, 2020](#)

Read our President's latest message.

[Click Here »](#)

**Current News letter**  
Posted in [Latest OTF](#) by [marquod59](#) on [June 24, 2020](#)

Check out our latest "On the Fly"

[Click Here »](#)

**Virtual June Meeting: Docklight Panel Discussion**  
Posted in [Event updates](#) by [marquod59](#) on [June 17, 2020](#)

Suncoast Fly Fishers, This is to remind you that we'll have an online panel sharing their docklight/beach fly fishing tips on Facebook Thursday, June 18th

[Click Here »](#)

**SFF Virtual Monday!**  
Posted in [SFF Virtual Updates](#) by [marquod59](#) on [June 16, 2020](#)

Suncoast Fly Fishers Launches Internet Video Series. Tune In to our Facebook page every Monday at 7:30pm to see the latest presentation

[Click Here »](#)

**June Outing is a GO!!**  
Posted in [Event updates](#) by [marquod59](#) on [June 16, 2020](#)

Our June outing is our long-standing and much celebrated docklights outing, and now it's our Docklights AND Beaches outing.

JUNE OUTING, Friday-Saturday-Sunday, June 19-20-21

[Click Here »](#)

[Suncoastflyfishers.com](http://Suncoastflyfishers.com)

# We are Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg

## 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 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue N turn North on 72<sup>nd</sup> St. N. Turn left (West) on 26<sup>th</sup> 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](http://SuncoastFlyFishers.com)

[Facebook.com/scff2020S](https://www.facebook.com/scff2020S)

## Club and FFI Membership combined

Suncoast Fly Fishers currently has 125 members including 15 family members and 6 honorary members. Annual dues are payable in September. This also includes benefits and annual membership in [Fly Fishers International](#) and the [Florida Council](#) of Fly Fishers International

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## Suncoast Fly Fishers

P. O. Box 40821  
St Petersburg, FL 33743  
[www.suncoastflyfishers.org](http://www.suncoastflyfishers.org)

## Club Officers

Pres: Rick Warfel  
Vice Pres: Quin Berry  
Secretary: David Redd  
Treasurer: Tom Gadacz

## Board of Directors

Bill Scarola, Bob Burkard, Bruce Evensen, Ryan Sollars, Cliff Nigh, Karen Warfel, George Haseltine, James Davis

**Committees**--Members are encouraged to serve on one or two committees. Do you? If not, speak to one of the officers at the next meeting.

Casting: 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  
Facebook: Woody Miller  
Hog Roast: Open

Outings: Bob Burkard, David Redd, Bill AuCoin

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, Marshall Craig.

## Bob Burkard: June Docklight/Beach Outing



*Bob Burkard, Outings Committee*

June's docklight/beach outing gave us lots of winning.

Tim Elms stood on the bow and fished. Skipper Dennis did his duties with the big outboard, Power Pole and trolling motor. They focused on one special docklight in Boca Ciega Bay. Dennis won't tell us exactly which light except to say it has produced winners before. See Dennis' article about his docklighting adventure with Tim in this issue of the newsletter.

We also know that Tim spent a good part of the evening casting to baby tarpon. But, they did squeeze a bit of time in to catch the designated species for this outing – snook. And they caught lots of seatrout, too, returning about 4:30 am. Tired, I'm sure.

### And Tim caught the winner, 24.5 inches long.

Well, that prompted quite a discussion. It turns out David Redd caught a snook that was a tad longer, 25-inches, but David withdrew his catch from consideration because he was fishing with a guide and he didn't feel right about it. Since then the board has discussed this and agreed that fishing with a guide is great, and your catches will be publicized, but they can't be entered into the monthly outing or annual outing tournaments.

And we have new leaders in the annual tournament outing. Mark Hays takes the lead in the redfish category. He caught a 22-inch red on a light in the Jungle Prada area.

And Mandy McGarry, fishing with Mark, landed a 19-inch seatrout so she takes the lead in that category, beating out the 17-inch seatrout that Mark caught during the June outing.

Other members who we know were fishing lights or beaches included Quin Berry, James Davis and Gary Sundberg. I docklight fished with Bill AuCoin and we had a pretty good night. I landed two snook, both about 20 inches long. I saw a big snook strike at my fly but he missed. And I had a huge snook on for a time but he broke me off on a piling.



*Bob working a docklight. C'mon, snookie!*

### 2020 Outing Tournament Leaders

Species	Length	Winner	Outing (Month)
Longest bream	9.5"	Tim Elms	Virtual outing (May)
Longest black bass	17"	Tim Elms	Virtual outing (May)
Longest snook	34"	Jack Collins	Virtual outing (May)
Longest redfish	22"	Mark Hays	Docklight Outing (June)
Longest ladyfish	25"	Mandy McGarry	Weedon Island Preserve (January)
Longest seatrout	19"	Mandy McGarry	Docklight Outing (June)

*Bob*



# Bob Burkard: July 18 Outing at Fort DeSoto Park

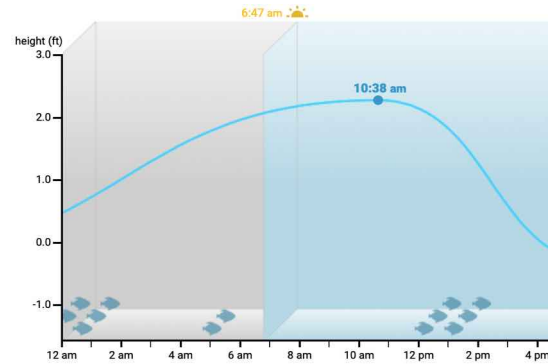
Our July outing is on. Well, fishing is on. But you can't eat.

Well, actually, you can eat. We just won't be having a sit down pavilion picnic like we did once upon a time. The board agrees it's just too risky. So, let's keep on social distancing.

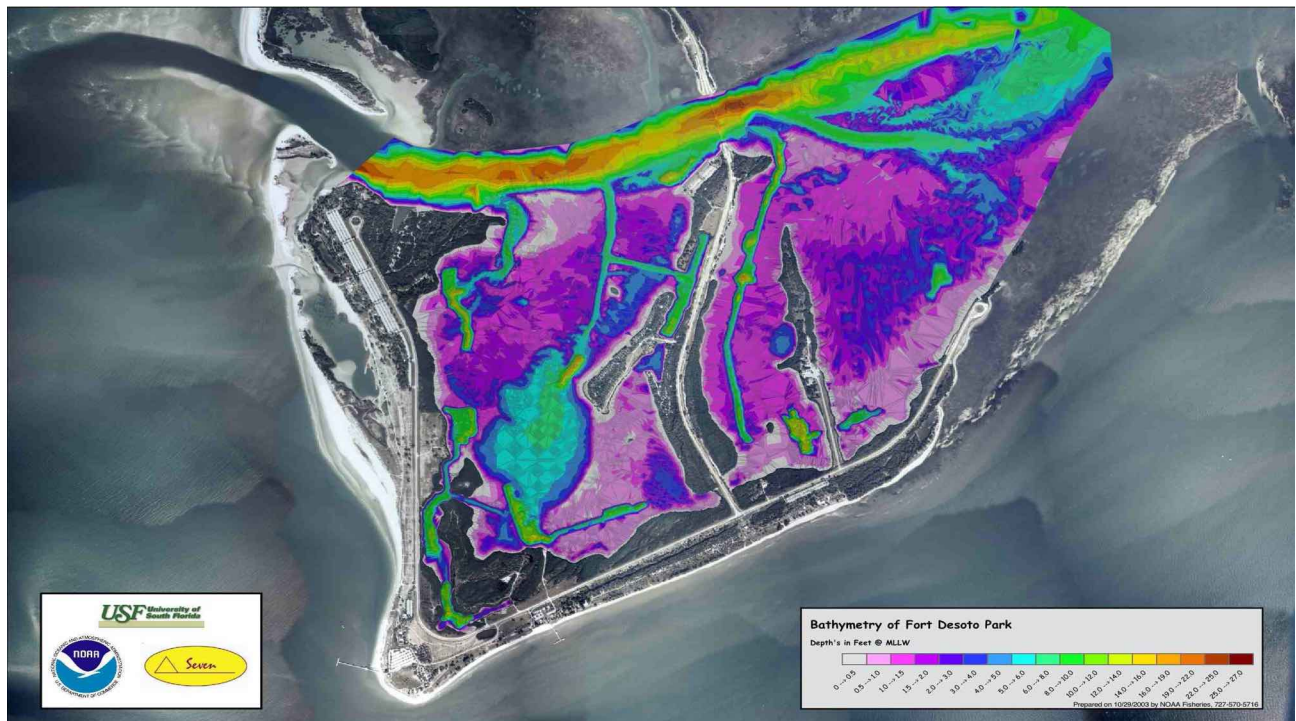
And that's okay, because the primary objective for most of us is to fly fish. And Saturday, July 18, we can all fly fish one of the great saltwater fishing spots. Fort DeSoto Park at the mouth of Tampa Bay. By the way, did you hear that big snook are spawning on the beaches?

Fish near the park from your kayak or boat, or wade in. There'll be prizes awarded to the member who catches the longest snook, the longest redfish and the longest seatrout. Take a picture and email it to me at [robertburkard9@gmail.com](mailto:robertburkard9@gmail.com)

You can fish all day Saturday. FYI, the park opens at 7 am. Entry fee is \$5 per vehicle.



*We'll have an incoming tide the morning of July 18 at Fort DeSoto Park. The outgoing tide starting at 10:30 looks amazing. (Tides4 Fishing)*



*This Bathymetry map of water inside Fort DeSoto Park shows the depth in colors. The more yellow-orange-red colors show deeper water. That's Bunces Pass at the top.*

## Mandy McGarry: Docklight fishing with Mark Hays



Friday afternoon I see a missed call from Mark Hayes with a voicemail, “Call me back If you want to go fish tonight”.

Now whether you are just learning to fish or have been fishing for years, if you are lucky enough to get a personal invitation to go fish with Mark you better drop what you’re doing and go fish! So that’s exactly what I did.

After ending my workday I tied a quick white Mylar mullet fly--*Thank you Bruce for the instructional videos* --and met Mark for what turned out to be a long and eventful night of fishing.

Around 9 we launched out of Jungle Prada and, boy, was it a zoo! The park was packed. Boats were zipping around from every direction. It was just starting to get dark and we were a little worried that we had made a mistake going out too early.

After putt-putting around looking at the waterfront mansions we landed on our first dock light of the night. On the first or second cast I hooked a small ladyfish. Although I could have easily stayed there all night catching small lady fish, we agreed to move along to bigger and better things.

The next dock was also full of fish. Catfish with a mix of snapper and trout. As Mark caught a snapper to throw in the cooler, I hooked a 19-inch trout.

As the night went on it seemed like every accessible dock we motored up to had heaps of fish gravitating towards it. Each of us continued catching so many trout I lost count. Mark caught a few more snapper and then landed a healthy snook.

As we were fishing our way back, Mark spotted two schools of redfish swimming around neighboring docks. Pretty quickly he hooked and fought a 19-inch redfish to the boat followed by another redfish at the neighboring dock. This one measured 22-inches. It was amazing seeing how strong those fish are.

We stuck around those docks for a while longer hoping I could land a redfish as well. But after a few unsuccessful bites we were both pretty exhausted and headed back in.

All in all, it was a fantastic outing. I learned a lot (as I always do when fishing with Mark) and caught a lot of fish. But after fishing alone for months, the best part was enjoying the comradery of fishing with a friend.



*Mark Hays and his 22-inch docklight redfish, which now leads the tournament in the redfish category.*

Mandy

## Dennis Marquis: Docklighting the June Outing



Kudos to the Board for championing the June Docklight Outing despite the Covid challenges we are all experiencing. I pray that the membership is able to stave off infection and stay safe. I miss seeing all of you at the monthly meetings and outings.

It's interesting to me, how quickly I take aspects of life for granted. I'm not going to say it is human nature, but I seem to fall victim to it one too many times. This Docklight Outing proved to be another example of how quickly I tend to do so.

Tim Elms and I set out about 9 pm Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> to start our night. We headed to a location (somewhere in Boca Ciega Bay Aquatic Preserve), that I had previously scouted. By the time we eased into the area of the first docklight it was dark, quiet, and there were snook patrolling the shadows of the light.

Tim tied on a Gibby's DT Variation, an all-white fly that Tim enjoys fishing. As a caveat, you can easily find the YouTube video by Steve Gibson on the Internet. Steve has been a guest speaker at previous SFF meetings.

Now back to Tim, who got up on the casting deck of my boat to line up the shot and get ready. The winds were quiet, so the boat was just sitting there not making a sound. Tim made practice casts away from the target until he had the amount of line needed to put the fly deep passed the right side of the light. I estimate about 55'. Tim made the cast look easy, and let the fly settle for a few seconds before starting to strip it back to the boat.

### **Dude...**

As the fly passed the light several snook came out of the darkness to chase it down. The lead snook never gave up and swallowed the fly. As it turned its head to go back into the darkness, Tim set the hook and the fight was on. I always use a landing net while docklight fishing, and I had it ready. Tim played the fish to the boat, but it didn't give up easy and after the third rise I was able to land it for Tim. Safely on the boat, measured, pictured taken 9:31pm, Tim released the 18.25-inch linesider. Not bad for an early start.

Tim was stoked. So was I. First light, first cast, bingo! We all get excited; the adrenaline hits and then subsides. In this case, Tim kept talking about the whole setup, the shot, the fight, etc. as if it was his first time. Knowing Tim as an avid fly fisher, I assumed he had fished docklights for snook before, so I never really broached the subject while we were planning the trip or traveling to the first light. And Tim never volunteered any information to the contrary. After what seemed to be an exceptionally long time, I suggested that Tim was acting like this was the first snook he had landed off a docklight, that's when Tim told me, "Dude, this is the first time I've docklight fished!"

While the night started good, we didn't see another snook until hours later. In between we saw plenty of juvie tarpon in one or two lights of every canal we explored. Tim had two nice hookups fighting both tarpon back to the boat, where they jumped, spit the hook and bumped into the boat in the process. It was fun!

*Continued on next page*

## P2/Dennis Marquis: June's docklight and beach outing

On the way home around 2:30am, I stopped by the light where Truk landed the outing winner in 2019. It's a white light that shines down, which I prefer from the lights shining up. You can't always see the fish in these lights, but you know they are there.

After losing the Gibson DT Special to one of the tarpon, Tim had tied on a greenback looking Thunderstruck Minnow (a la Cliff Nigh). I gave Tim specific instructions on where I wanted him to lay the fly. This dock has several pilings set away from the dock, which makes the cast more difficult. Tim angled the cast as instructed and placed the fly under the dock. On retrieve, several nice size snook came to chase the fly down, but from the left a bigger snook flashed up and beat them to it. I had to move the boat away from the pilings, as Tim was fighting the fish. Safely boated, measured, picture taken 2:43 am, Tim released the 24.5-inch 2020 June outing winner.

We headed back to my home canal, where we didn't intend to fish as it was getting close to 3:00 am. However I noticed fish schooling at the same light where Tom Gadacz and I landed a few mangrove snapper on a previous docklight trip. I told Tim the story and suggested he give it a try. He was still using the Thunderstruck minnow pattern. The snapper would strike at the fly and peel off, but after a few of those, Tim got the right hook set and landed his *first ever* mangrove snapper on the fly. That's two "firsties" for Tim in one night.



We headed home; at least we thought so until we came across another down white light in a corner near a small bridge. We could see bait running the light and it looked too juicy to pass up. Plus, I hadn't fished much, opting to let Tim enjoy his first-time experience. Not wanting to waste time and get one of my rods out, Tim gave me his 8-wt Helios 3 with the Thunderstruck fly on it, and I got to work. First cast went deep and straight into the dark corner. As the fly transitioned into the glow of the light, we could see a school of trout fighting to eat the fly. I hooked up easily and boated the first of nine seatrout in about 20 minutes. It was a picnic! Every cast would result in a small school chasing down the fly with Tim narrating in the back ground. After my fill, Tim took over and had his fun landing his first docklight trout – the third *firsty* of the night!

Knowing that the current year record for specks was 17-inches, Tim and I tried to land a trout that would beat it. In fact, as the school was chasing the fly down we would yank the fly out of the water if we didn't see a fish we thought was larger than 17". There was a 17"+ trout in there and we would try to favor the fly near it, but we didn't get it to latch on. So we headed home for real this time. Got into the dock around 4:30am, much later than we had planned. Thank God Tim brought the Publix fried chicken tenders!

The whole night was a blast! Fishing with Tim, a fly fisher who had never docklight-fished before, made me realize that I take too many fishing opportunities for granted. I'm blessed with a home on the water, a nice boat, plenty of wading spots close by and there is always the kayak, but yet I get grumpy if I get skunked, when I should simply be thankful I woke up and had the opportunity to fish again.

*Dennis*



## Duane Mertz: Docklight and Beach Live Online Panel Discussion



Duane Mertz

*Our club is not having any in-person meetings. But now we can meet up on the Internet. Club specialists and fishing guides shared their dock light and beach fishing secrets in real time on the SFF Facebook site June 18. Our club president Rick Warfel introduced the panel and passed along the questions posed by members via Facebook postings and from members texting him on his smart phone. Our panel experts included:*

Alan Sewell – long-time SFF member and 42-year docklight snook specialist

Captain Lisa Lowman – Gulf Coast guide and flats and docklight specialist

Mike Larkin, NOAA. Mike has a doctorate in fisheries management and biology from the University of Miami

Captain Court Douthit – Inshore/docklight guide

### The best docklights to fish

The best locations for dock light fishing are docks that have underwater lights. Underwater lights provide maximum illumination of fish allowing the angler to see the fish's details. Ninety-nine percent of snook caught in dock light are sight-fished.

- When fishing docks with overhead lights, concentrate on casting to the shadow line or edge of the light. Here you will find snook lurking to ambush bait fish.
- Never fish docks with yellow lights as they do not draw fish.
- Docks where sail boats are moored can often be productive as they require deeper depths.
- Dock owners have eliminated many lights to discourage fishermen.
- If you do not see fish, move on to the next dock as they will often be found there.

### How to cast to docklights

The experienced fly fisherman will start with top water casts and work down the water column with heavier flies to cover the immediate area.

- Snook will also be found up against sea walls. You may not see them. Cast anyway.
- The angler will often find other species when pursuing snook including redfish, trout, ladyfish and catfish.
- Stealth is important in dock light fishing as the prey will spook easily.
- Also, short single casts with no false casting and line splash are critical. Most successful casts travel no more than 50-feet. Using a trolling motor to quietly stalk the prey is recommended.
- When fishing docks with overhead lights, concentrate on casting to the shadow line or edge of the light. Here you will find snook lurking to ambush bait fish.

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Captain Lisa Lowman and SFF member Alan Sewell



SFF member Mike Larkin (l) and Captain Court Douthit

## P2/Duane Mertz: Docklight and Beach Live Discussion

### Dock light fishing tackle

- The angler must have a stout rod and strong tippet to pull fish away from pilings where lines are easily parted. 8-1/2 foot rods in 6-8-9 and 10 weights are recommended.
- For leaders, the panel recommends a 9-foot 40-30-20# assembly or a straight 9-foot 25-30# tapered leader. Some of the group preferred fluorocarbon while others like monofilament leader material.
- White flies with several different weight eyes are recommended. Other choices include grey flies, green bait-fish flies, or shrimp patterns if you detect shrimp in the area. Naturally, imitating baitfish found in the area is always recommended. Small Clousers are often deadly. Simple flies often work the best.
- Number 2 circle hooks are recommended as they provide higher hook-up ratios. Of special interest is the Mustad #2 - C7SS hook. Using flies tied with synthetic materials is recommended.

### Beach Fishing Tactics

- The best time to fish from the beach is between 5-AM and the sunrise.
- Fish the surf area. This is where snook ambush baitfish confused by the waves and currents.
- If the surf is up, use intermediate line so wave action does not affect the line. Use floating line in calm water.
- Passes can be very productive and snook move from pass to pass. Also concentrate on structure or rocks where baitfish can hide from predators. You will find snook spawning in cuts during full and new moons.
- Casts of 50 feet placed in the right area can be very productive.
- Use your rod to pull a fish. That's key.
- Crab flies can be highly effective from the beach as they imitate sand fleas and small crabs.

*Duane*

### **It's not too late to watch the docklight panel. Here's how**

If you're a member of Facebook go to [facebook.com/scff2020](https://facebook.com/scff2020). On the menu on the left side of the page click on "Videos." Then select the photo that shows President Rick Warfel introducing the panel.

If you're not a member of Facebook, then go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) then search for Suncoast Fly Fishers. If you land on the club site, then click on "videos" on the left side of the page. Photos will pop up. Select the one showing President Rick Warfel, the emcee.

## James Davis: Coffee Pot Bayou Snook

I caught this 22-inch snook on a nightfly, all white, fishing Coffee Pot Bayou. I did not catch any other fish. I saw some fish but they would not bite. It really, really was a beautiful night, I did not end up staying out too late.

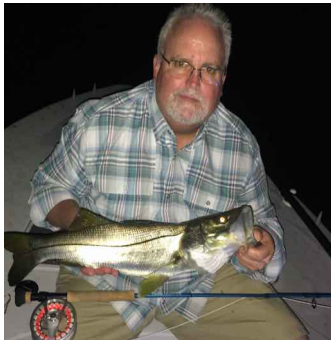
Also, Gary Sundberg and his son were fishing nearby and his son caught a 20 inch snook.

Congrats to Tim Elms. That's a good fish at 24 and a half.



*James*

## David Redd: Docklight slam—snook, reds, seatrout



Quin and I fished Friday and Saturday nights with Capt. Court Douthit.

Quin had a 17" trout and I caught a 25" snook and a 14" redfish.

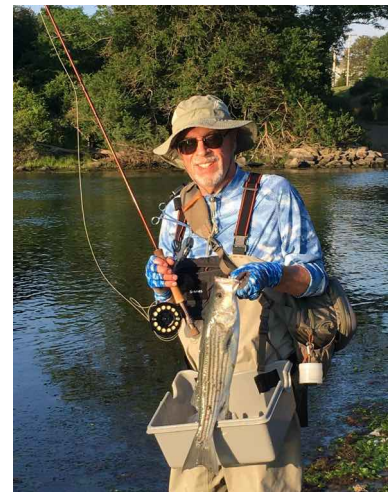
*David*

## Ray Smith: Bend-the-rod stripers in Rhode Island

I've been fishing the Narrow River here in RI where I live when I'm not in Florida. The Narrow is a tidal river and where I fish is only about a half mile from the ocean and mostly I fish the outgoing tide.

There is a large estuary close by and the outgoing tides provide plenty of dining opportunities for striped bass, bluefish and flounder, and occasionally an American shad ends up on the end of your line. Mostly schoolie sized stripers put the bend in the rod and that is always fun!

*Ray*





# Robert Fischer and Jim Swann: Smallmouth Bass in Maine

Jim Swann and I went to Wheaton's Lodge in Maine for some smallmouth bass fishing and some cool weather. We got both. 60 to 80 degrees and blue skies.



*Jim Swann of Swann's Flyfishing Outfitters in Dade City, a long time Special Friend of the Suncoast Fly Fishers.*



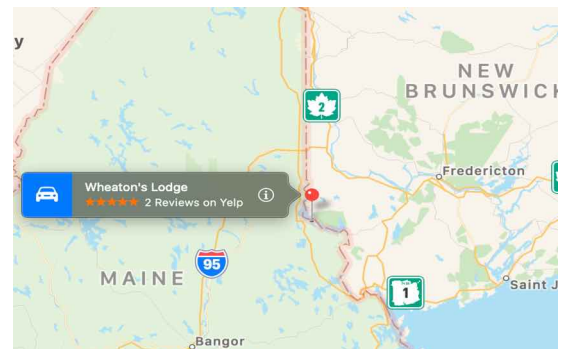
*Robert Fischer with one of 150 or so smallmouth bass he caught in Maine. It was a two-fer. He also escaped Florida's summer H & H for a few days.*



*We fished from handmade 20' wooden canoes and were treated to an excellent shore lunch cooked over an open fire by our guide.*



*In three days I probably caught 150 smallmouth and Jim caught over 200. They liked large foam spiders, curly tail grubs, Rapalas, and everything else.*



*Smallmouth bass like it up here.*

*Robert*



## Dennis Marquis: A Great River Adventure

Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, I went for a kayak/fishing trip on the Lower Hillsborough Wilderness Preserve (Hillsborough River) with Alan Sewell, Ted Rich and Kevin Kelly. It won't soon be a day I forget – all for good reasons! It's also a day that I learned to appreciate my three buddies in a whole new way.



*Hey Ted Rich, time to go unda limbo stick?*

How the four of us got together for the trip was via an assortment of emails, phone calls and text messages – I think signal flags were even used somewhere in there a bit. We eventually got it together when we learned the parks were still closed because of Covid and had to cancel the trip. Coincidentally, the parks opened the following week, so we decided to reschedule and give it a go. Alan knows a guy who runs a kayak concession on the river, it was his friend's advice that the river might not yet be ready for company as the park rangers hadn't had time to "clear it". We disregarded this advice and went anyway. While I could have easily said this was a mistake, it wasn't, in hindsight it created an exciting team building exercise for the crew.

Since joining the club over 4 years ago, I listened to the many stories of the natural beauty of the Hillsborough River and still I did not venture on it before this first trip. Alan had us all meet at the Morris Bridge Park (with kayak launch) by 9am. As I was traveling with Alan, I had no problem making it on time. Ted was already there when we arrived and Kevin showed up shortly after. We got the kayaks and our gear ready and shoved off. As we were planning on fishing, each of us had fly gear, most had a couple of rod setups.

The first half of the paddle was a winding narrow portion of the river with a slow current – almost perfect for fishing. I got busy and started to cast and hooked up with a bluegill pretty quickly, Alan (rightfully so), suggested that maybe I leave the rod alone for a while and just enjoy the natural beauty of the river, so I did. It was grand! I felt like I was paddling down a remote region of the Florida that hadn't had visitors for decades – not kidding. It is naturally spectacular. Old Florida vegetation, giant cypress trees with their roots in the water, wild white lilies and all kinds of birds singing a forest symphony just for us – we never saw another body on the water for the whole trip. Oh yeah, gators! I'll come back to that one later.

### **Anybody got a machete?**

Remember I mentioned the rangers hadn't cleared the river since the parks were closed. Well it didn't take long for us to come across the first of four substantial obstacles. Four times, we had to navigate, around, under or over trees that had fallen from bank to bank. A machete would have helped in at least one case, but arms and fingers did the trick. Alan and I were ahead of Kevin and Ted, so we would call back on the cell, alert them to the obstacle and advise on how to best get through it. Then we would wait to make sure they got through it ok. The teamwork had already naturally taken shape and fishing became less important than making sure all four of us made it to Trout Creek Park as planned.

*Continues on next page*

## P2/Dennis Marquis: Oh S\_\_\_T! Is that a gator?

I have to admit taking the 4wt out (on loan from Alan) and casting a bit while we waited. This strategy by end of day yielded a nice half dozen local bream. Never using a 4wt before, it was a blast and I laughed like a young schoolboy each time I fought one of the local pan fish with it.

So far so good, and then as we turned a corner, there it was -- a large tree, bank to bank. On close inspection, we could not fit under it. It was too thick and impossible to go over -- the conclusion was we had to go around it. Alan and I pulled up to the bank, secured the kayaks and did a quick survey, which found stable but soggy land, poison ivy and some thickets.

We called back to Ted and Kevin to alert them and tell them we were waiting. A few minutes later they showed up. We got all four kayaks on to land and decided we would launch Alan first, followed by Ted, and then Kevin and I would be last. We hauled each kayak about 50 ft. till we were south of the tree and had a somewhat clear launch area. Keep in mind the four of us were around the launch area for about 10 minutes, in and out of the water, lining up each kayak, getting a person into it and then pushing them off. This was repeated until I was in my kayak.

### **Uh Oh**

Alan moved a bit downstream to make room for the other three because it was tight. Ted and Kevin saddled up next to my kayak so it wouldn't go down stream before I got in. With all of us safely in, me, Kevin and Ted smiled and took stock in our success -- then like a rocket being fired out of a cannon, an alligator, easily as long as our kayaks, exploded off the bank about 10-feet from where we were all standing just moments earlier. It literally was in the air, off the bank, right between Ted and Kevin's kayak and then splashed into the water and disappeared. I was awe struck; couldn't believe it. It had to be watching the four of us the whole time. In Florida, you have to be vigilant.

We paddled on from there stopping for drinks, a bite to eat, to take pictures, and do a little fishing. By the time we found our next obstacle, another tree, bank to bank, we were all feeling pretty good about the adventure and the gator had now grown in our minds to 20-feet long.

This tree had a strong current sweeping under it, where there was a buckle in the trunk, creating a space, which I thought we could all squeeze under. The team agreed to give it a try and I went first to demonstrate the proper "squeeze" technique, which was more like a limbo.

I'm 175-lbs. and thin; that's all I'll say at this point. So, there I go doing a "limbo" under the tree. I did manage to squeeze through and squirt myself out to the other side. I let the current suck me through. Once on the other side, I saw Alan getting ready to come through, so I thought, this was probably going to take a few minutes, I should fish! After a cast or two, I heard a commotion and looked back to see Alan's kayak half way through making no new progress -- I paddled back to help. Coaching Alan to bend backwards more "limbo-limbo", I pulled while Kevin and Ted pushed, and Alan squirted through. But we were not done yet.

*Continues on next page*

## P3/Dennis Marquis: Hey Ted, how low can you go?

Two to go. Oh yeah, by this time we were all laughing hysterically. I mean this was belly aching laughter. Next through was Kevin. I'm thinking Kevin was probably a teenage limbo champion because he came through pretty quickly with no difficulties.

### **Ted be limbo, Ted be quick. Did Ted go unda limbo stick?\***

Ted was last. He had a challenge navigating the current. It kept trying to turn his kayak broadside of the tree. After several attempts, he got the bow to stick through the opening while the rest of us coached/urged him forward. Ted got through but, unfortunately, the kayak pitched backward into the current and Ted flipped and fell into a deep hole. I saw Ted go down twice, we paddled up to his kayak to secure it, reached out with a paddle and when Ted popped up the second time he managed grabbed it. We all did have life preservers on. We got Ted over to the bank, flipped his kayak back over, and started to chase after his gear floating down the river.

With Ted's kayak upright, most of his gear recovered, we all broke down and laughed again – that belly hurting. At that point, I didn't care what the river would have in store for us, I felt that we could manage it and have a good time doing it.



### **Another omen: Vultures**

We paddled on and came to the portion of the river where it opens, getting much wider, but no less beautiful. Here we got to see the vulture hoard Alan had told us about. A great collection of vultures on the shore and in the trees. It gave me pause. Did they know from history that not all survived the upper river trek, resulting in easy pickings floating by?

We fished a bit, ate and enjoyed the scenery. You could fish this river forever; every square inch of bank on both sides has cover and looks fishy. Surprisingly so, the day ended up not being about fishing, and more about enjoying the unexpected adventure, helping each other out and laughing loudly. I'd do it again in a heartbeat.



Kevin Kelly (l) and Ted Rich flip the 'yak back over

I would encourage you to take the same paddle, from Morris Bridge Park down river to Trout River Creek; I would be surprised if you were disappointed. Only, don't anchor up for a picnic lunch on the bank. I'm positive that gator had friends we didn't see.

### *Dennis*

*\*Jack be limbo, Jack be quick. Jack go unda limbo stick. All around the limbo clock. Hey, let's do the limbo rock. Limbo lower now. Limbo lower now. How low can you go? (lyrics, Limbo Rock, popular song by Chubby Checker in 1962.)*





## Scott Russell Orlando bass. Yeah!

Here is a pic from a nice bass I got on a Clouser during our Orlando family vacation a few weeks ago. Over the week I was lucky enough to do pretty well and my son (using a spinning reel) had good luck too. I also went to Osceola Outback Adventures and caught some Barramundi.

*Scott*

## Jim Shipley: Grandson Jonathan's Trout Trip in N. C.



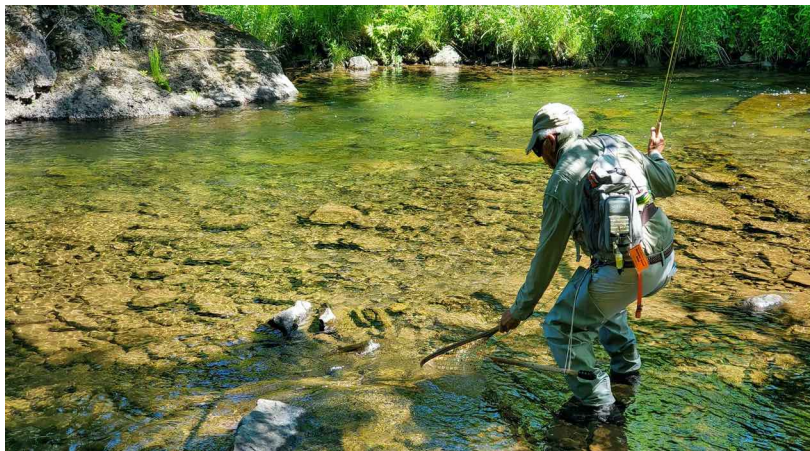
Here are a couple of pictures of trout my grandson Jonathan Shipley caught this month in North Carolina on the wade trip and a float trip with his father.

He has been fly fishing since he was 5 years old and seems to do pretty well. *(Yes he does!, said the editor)*

*Jim*



## Pat Damico, Beaverkill River in the Catskills



Fishing the famous Beaverkill River in the Catskill Mountains in New York state.

*Pat*



## Bruce Evensen: Pin Fish Fly



*Bruce Evensen*

This is my fly of the month and I'll be teaching it on Facebook, live, at 7:30 pm Monday, July 13. You can watch and even ask questions by logging on to **Facebook**. The pinfish fly is a very, very productive fly for all of our inshore gamefish.

*Bruce*



### Materials

- Hook: 1/0 or 2/0. Short shank live bait hook
- Thread: Danville Flat Waxed Nylon (white)
- Belly: E.P. Belly Fiber, white
- Body: E. P. Light Olive
- Eyes: Doll eyes, white/black
- Weed guard: 20 or 30# mono

### Tying Sequence

1. Use a 1/0 or 2/0 short shank live bait hook. Wrap with white flat wax nylon thread from the hook eye to above the barb.
2. On the tail wrap a clump of EP Fiber (white) on top. Take five-inch piece of light olive EP Fiber and wrap it in the middle between the barb and the hook point. Bend the forward part back over the tail. Wrap with three or four wraps.
3. Move ¼-inch forward and repeat step two with light olive EP Fiber.
4. Turn the fly over and tie on white fiber for the belly behind the hook point. Same as step two.
5. Rotate back to top of the fly and repeat step two again.
6. Wrap small head with white thread. Knot off head. Cut and coat with drop of epoxy.
7. Brush out fly in all directions with a flea comb or a toothbrush. Trim to the shape of a pinfish.
8. Glue on white and black doll eyes slightly above the hook shank and 1/8-inch in from the hook eye. Let dry.
9. With a black Sharpie draw three slightly angled lines forward ¼-inch apart.

*Bruce*

## Capt. Pat Damico: Captain's Corner



### Tarpon on the Fly.

This is the best time of year to catch big tarpon on a fly. Stories of needing an hour and a half to get a silver-side to the boat are common. Is this necessary or even good for both fish and angler?

When a bucket-sized mouth inhales your small fly, usually a size 1 or 1/0, and you manage a successful hook set, then what? The fish instantly reacts, usually jumping and heading away. If you raise the rod and let her run against the drag, you can have an empty spool.

Tackle should be adequate, an 11-weight rod, good large arbor reel, a smooth drag with plenty of 30-pound test backing. Many good guides will use a 40 to 60-pound shock tippet attached to the fly. Skipping the lighter class tippet, used mostly for record book work, will give you a mechanical advantage.

Immediately concentrate on keeping the fish off balance and confused. You must bow when they jump, giving slack to prevent break-offs. Put as much pressure as possible on the fish by keeping the rod tip low and close to the water with a bend that goes into the rod grip.

When the fish goes right, with rod tip low, apply pressure to her left side. Getting the line over the fish and off-balance is also helpful. Keep a moderate bend in the rod to prevent rod breakage. Avoid rest for you and the fish to shorten the fight and release a healthy fish.

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

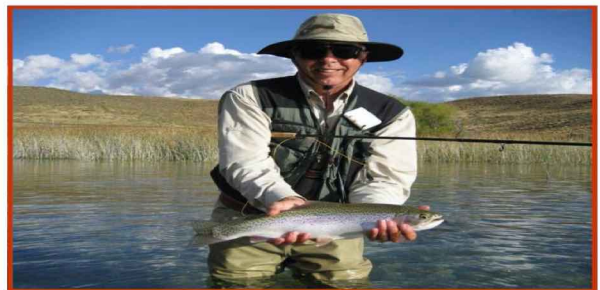
## From the July, 2007 issue of *On The Fly*

### SFF Program—July 19 Fishing Argentina with Capt. Pat Damico

Recently, member Pat Damico spent a week in Argentina on a dream fishing trip where he fished the fabled waters of that unspoiled country. Pat will share his memories and pictures of that trip with us high-lighted with a Power Point presentation that we all will enjoy.

By popular request, after the Argentina presentation Pat will discuss his techniques for baby tarpon fishing in local waters and display all the secret flies necessary to bring these mini silver kings to the boat.

Don't miss this meeting!! .....PS



Capt Pat Damico holds a typical Argentinean rainbow trout  
Photo: Pat Damico

## Fly Gear for Sale or Swap

**Alan Sewell has put a lot of gear up for sale. 727-470-4570. Email [sewellalan@yahoo.com](mailto:sewellalan@yahoo.com)**

- Three fly rods -- \$90. Lamiglas 2-piece blanks with custom wraps and top components. 6wt, 8wt, 9wt.
- YAK GEAR StandnCast. Fits all kayaks with gear tracks, or mount to hull with supplied hardware. Folds flat and stands up when pulled. Rod and paddle holder included. Items still wrapped in carton. Never used. \$95.00
- Humminbird TCR portable color depth and fish finder. Takes two 6V batteries. Transducer fits on trolling motor or on kayak hull. \$35.
- Humminbird dual-scan color fish finder and depth unit. Transducer mounted on adjustable shaft. Clamp-on bracket holds unit and shaft. Never used. Runs on 6V battery. \$60.

**Ocean kayak and extras from Frank Moss. Call and leave a message: 727-421-5354**

Ocean Kayak, sit on top Prowler 15'. Extras include a paddle with tether, roof top car carrier, 6 plugs, sea anchor and lead anchor, two fly rod holders, one spinning rod holder, stick-it anchor pole, ceiling hoist, beach launch wheels, several nylon lines, a fly fishing vest. \$1,500.

**Larry Lurie is selling his 16-foot Bass Tracker. Just \$4800. Email him at [lawrencelurie@gmail.com](mailto:lawrencelurie@gmail.com)**

40 HP Mercury. Walk through Bimini top; Minn Kota Power Drive Copilot 55-lb thrust trolling motor. Lowrance color fish finder/GPS. Shortwave radio w/marine band, NOAA weather. Stereo AM/FM/W-CD. Boat cover; Minn Kota electric winch; 22-gal aerated bait tank; two 6-gallon gas tanks w/ tank switch; two new deep-cycle batteries; built in charger w/switch to run on either battery or both. PayPal.

**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 2ftx2Fort, \$85.00
- Epoxy glue holder hand-made by Bruce Evensen, \$24.00

**Lynn Skipper has two fly rods and a reel. 813-542-3195. [vintagevette@msn.com](mailto:vintagevette@msn.com) 813-541-3195**

- ROSS FLY STIK HEAVY 10 wt 7'11" 4 piece with tube. Ideal rod for those night trips after snook under the docks where you need to horse them away from the dock quickly. Originally \$200, now \$100. Barely used with no nicks, blemishes etc.
- ORVIS TLS Power Matrix 4 piece 3 wt 8'4" Midflex with case. Originally \$175, now \$100.
- Orvis Battenkill ¾ wt reel with backing and 3 wt WFF line. Used one trip to Montana last year. Originally \$125, now \$75 OBO.

**Want to sell or trade? Need some fly gear? Email [Bill AuCoin, wmaucoin@verizon.net](mailto:Bill AuCoin, wmaucoin@verizon.net)**

## Bill AuCoin : Flyfisher Flyover



**Well, aren't we lucky?** If social distancing is the new pandemic behavior code then, hey, let's go fishing all the time. ([Today](#))

**Good news. Tampa Bay acidity is lower.** Tampa Bay Estuary Program reports that the increasing amount of seagrass coverage in the bay is apparently lowering the acidity level. That's good for fishes, scallops, crabs, you name it. ([The Fishing Wire](#))

**He went to Maine with Robert Fisher.** This guy creates flies from flip-flops, human hair, foam packing material, nylon dusters, fiber-optic wire, and whatever. The word *resourceful* doesn't do him justice. Yeah, it's Jim Swann, one of our club's longtime Special Friends. ([Tampa Bay Times](#))

**Beat the heat, too --** Fishing this trout river sounds like a good place to put on our to-do lists. I like it that they *plant trout in remote places*. I mean, very remote. They used a helicopter to plant trout in some areas. South Carolina ain't that far, you know. ([On The Fly South](#))

**Did you know?.** Here are five things we know about baby tarpon, thanks to Bonefish & Tarpon Trust. ([The Fishing Wire](#))

**Hey, that guy who helped design our new website?** Craig Smothers designs and ties some amazing flies, too. ([SaltFlies](#))

**I'm going to be doing this more often.** When, why, and how to use a sinking fly line? Mike Conner nails it in this evergreen article. One reason to abandon the floating line is when the surf causes your line to go up and down. And when it does, of course, you've lost control of the fly. Another biggie: floating grass. There's more. ([Florida Sportsman](#))

**Get shorty.** Seems like the latest shiny object of fly fishing talk is about shorter fly rods. Really? Well, yes, it turns out they have some big advantages. But, also, some disadvantages. You just gotta know when and where to use 'em. Docklight fishing is one of those occasions. ([Fly Life Magazine](#))

**Five stars.** Gary Sundberg would like to call our attention to this 7-piece fly tying kit. ([Sierra](#))

**You belong.** Let's not forget that as members of Suncoast Fly Fishers we are also paid-in-full members of Fly Fishers International. Spend some time on the FFI website and learn how much FFI does to ensure the legacy of fly fishing for all fish in all waters. While you're on the site, get the schedule of weekly webinars. ([Fly Fishers International](#))

**More beach snook tips.** Good timely information for fishing the July outing at Fort DeSoto Park. The guy in this video uses a spinning rod but don't hold that against him. The video shows lots of snook. LOTS! Yeah, they're facing into the current. Where is he? Just guessing, but to me it looks like North Beach at Fort DeSoto Park. I'll see you on the beach at Fort DeSoto Park at our July outing. ([Salt Strong](#))

**More docklight fishing tips.** Lots of good tips here except, for me, I'm not inclined to wait until the midnight hour to fish the lights. So, you'll have to catch one of those big snook for me, please. Oh no, I've already started humming that old Wilson Picket song *-I'm gunna wait 'til the midnight hour*. Funny. I never realized that Wilson Picket was a docklight fisherman. ([Florida Sportsman](#))



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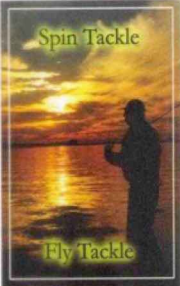
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