

On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg

*January 23 Outing
Weedon Island Preserve P6*



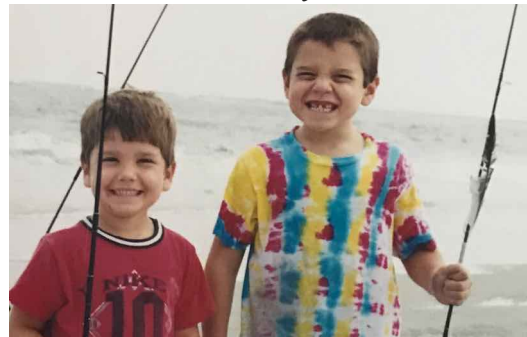
*December outing at Fort DeSoto
Park P5*



Flamingo P12



Once a fisher, always a fisher. P18



Congratulations to our 2020 Outing Tournament Winners

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 snook	34"	James Davis	Fort DeSoto Park (October)
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)
Longest seatrout	19"	Robert Fischer	North Tampa Bay Outing (Sept.)



President's Letter, January 2021

Suncoast Fly Fishers,

Out with the old, in with the new. Happy New Year! Well, I hope you aren't disappointed, but things really haven't changed all that much just yet. We still have the virus, we are still social distancing and SFF is still not holding in person events. Trust me, things are about to get better. The vaccine has gotten off to a rocky start but that will soon get sorted out.

Here is what I see going forward. As soon as the vaccine becomes widely available to the point that most people can get the shots if they want them and the infection rates start coming down, we will resume in person events. I don't know exactly when that will happen, but I am guessing it will be sometime late summer or early fall. The board will review the situation each month and as soon as we think it is safe to go back in the water, we will let you know.

What does that mean for the club? It means that we won't have our Trash & Treasure auction this month, we won't have a casting clinic this winter or spring and we won't have a Hog Roast again this year. We will continue to have monthly member meetings on ZOOM and virtual outings each month. Bruce will continue to hold online fly tying classes each Monday night and we will continue to grow our social media footprint. You can look forward to some exciting presentations at our member meetings. This month we will have a presentation by Christina Welsh. Christina is a graduate student at USF College of Marine Science. She is the recipient of last year's inaugural SFF sponsored scholarship and the FFI Conservation Award. Her research focuses on understanding the metabolic physiology of larval fish in response to climate change.

When we return, we plan to do it in style. Our first in person meeting will feature a special event and our first outing will include a family picnic with one of our signature meals, games and giveaway's. We will schedule a casting clinic in the fall and again after the first of the year in 2022. November will be our open house. This time we will do it live and in person. December will bring the return of the SFF holiday party and next January we will resume our Trash & Treasure auction. In March of 2022 we will gather for our best Hog Roast ever after a 2-year hiatus.

We won't ever forget 2020 and we may not ever return to precisely the way things were before the pandemic, but we will get back to doing the things that SFF is known for and we will get back to doing it in person. Stay safe and keep fishing!

Stay safe and keep fishing!

Rick

Rick Warfel, SFF President

Meetings, Outings, and More

January Virtual Meeting and Outing

Zoom Meeting, Thursday, January 21

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82761499392>

- We'll meet up on Zoom at 7 pm on Thursday, January 21. You'll get a reminder with sign-in information. The Zoom invitation for the member meeting will be the same each month.
- Our speaker is Christina Welsh, Ph.D. student at USF researching the effects of global warming on marine populations. She is the recipient of SFF's \$500 scholarship and the \$2000 Conservation Award from Fly Fishers International.

Saturday, January 23, Outing

- The outing is Saturday, January 23. Fish anywhere around Weedon Island Preserve. (No picnic. Covid-19, you know.)
- SFF outing prizes (\$10 gift certificates to Bill Jackson's Shop for Adventure) will go to the members catching the longest snook, seatrout and redfish. Measure. Take a picture. Email your picture to outings committee chair Bob Burkard. at robertburkard9@gmail.com
- Wade fishing? Meet up with other club members at 7 am in the main parking lot.

2021 Outings in Brief

- All locations still need final approval of the board of directors and may be adjusted depending on C-19
- Prizes at saltwater outings will be awarded for the longest snook, redfish, and seatrout except the June docklight outing prize is for the longest snook only.
- July outing is freshwater only anywhere in Pinellas County. Well, this will be interesting.
- Outings are on the Saturday morning following the third Thursday of each month. (December is earlier.)

January 23: Weedon Island Preserve

February 20: Fort DeSoto Park

March 20: Phillippe Park, Safety Harbor, fresh and salt

April 17: Undecided

May 22: Cypress Point Park, Tampa

June 19: Fish the dark—docklights, beaches – Friday and Saturday. Prize for the longest snook

July 17: Fish freshwater anywhere in Pinellas County

August 21: Urban Outing, Bay Vista Park

September 18: Carl Hanson Memorial on the Hillsborough River.

October 23: Fort DeSoto Park

November 20: War Veterans Memorial Park near Bay Pines VA Hospital

December 11: Fort DeSoto Park

Dues are (past) due. Now you can pay online

Karen Warfel has notified all members to pay their 2021 dues. If you haven't yet paid please do so now. You can pay online now on the Suncoast Fly Fishers website. Click on [eshop](#) on the menu bar. Or, if you have any questions about how much or how to pay, phone Karen at 813-505-3162 or email her at

KMWARFEL@YAHOO.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 22nd Avenue N turn North on 72nd St. N. Turn left (West) on 26th Avenue N. Then turn right into the rec center parking lot.

Monthly Outings

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

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

Visit our website and Facebook pages, too

SuncoastFlyFishers.com

Facebook.com/scff2020

Membership update

Suncoast Fly Fishers now has 129 members including 14 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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Welcome new member Mark Ely.

Suncoast Fly Fishers

P. O. Box 40821
St Petersburg, FL 33743
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: Cliff Nigh

Hog Roast: Open

Outings: Bob Burkard, David Redd, Bill AuCoin

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

Succession Plan: Rick Warfel

Programs: Board of Directors

Publicity: Bill AuCoin

Social media: Anne Hays

On The Fly

Bill AuCoin, editor; Duane Mertz, Anne Hays, Bob Hood, Tim Elms, Marshall Craig.

Bob Burkard: December Outing, Fort DeSoto Park



Bob Burkard, Outings Committee chairman

Dennis Marquis and Tony Piazza scored. Everybody else, not so much

The thing about fishing is the fish get to decide when they eat. On December 12, for the December outing, some diehard Suncoast Fly Fishers met up early at the boat ramp at Fort DeSoto Park. We waded in and fly-fished that big flat to the west. Was fishing slow? Well, yeah.

Except, for two members, it turned positive. But you had to stay around

for the change of tide. They were patient, don't you see? Dennis Marquis and Tony Piazza stayed put on the flat and then, as the clock inched toward noon, they both enjoyed 90 minutes catching nice slot trout. Tony caught an 18.5 inch seatrout. No snook, redfish, or ladyfish were measured and photographed but we do have proof for the longest seatrout. That would be Dennis' 19.5-incher. We have a winner.

The rest of us had to settle for little fishies. James Davis caught two trout (16", 14") and a sheepshead (10"). He expected better. He had fished the same area the day before the outing and caught a 28-inch redfish that took him into his backing. So a bunch of us gave up only to discover another let down. Some members parked their cars in slots reserved for boat-and-trailer. The result? A \$30 parking ticket. Yeah. Yuk.



Dennis Marquis caught the longest seatrout for the December outing prize.



Tony Piazza with one of many 18-+ inch seatrout.



They were ready for action, but were the fish? From the left, Bob Burkard, David Redd, Tony Piazza, Bob Hood, Wayne Shriver, and Dennis Marquis.

Bill AuCoin caught a tiny trout and a little barracuda. Others on this flat didn't fess up to catching anything worth talking about.



"cuda was not the designated species

Bob Burkard: January 23 Outing -- Weedon Island Preserve

Fish the water surrounding Weedon Island Preserve including Tampa Bay, Riviera Bay, Bayou Grande and Master's Bayou just south of Gandy Blvd.

We'll have a slow incoming tide. Riviera Bay is noted for its big ladyfish. Big seatrout and redfish are being caught along the mangrove shorelines of Tampa Bay.

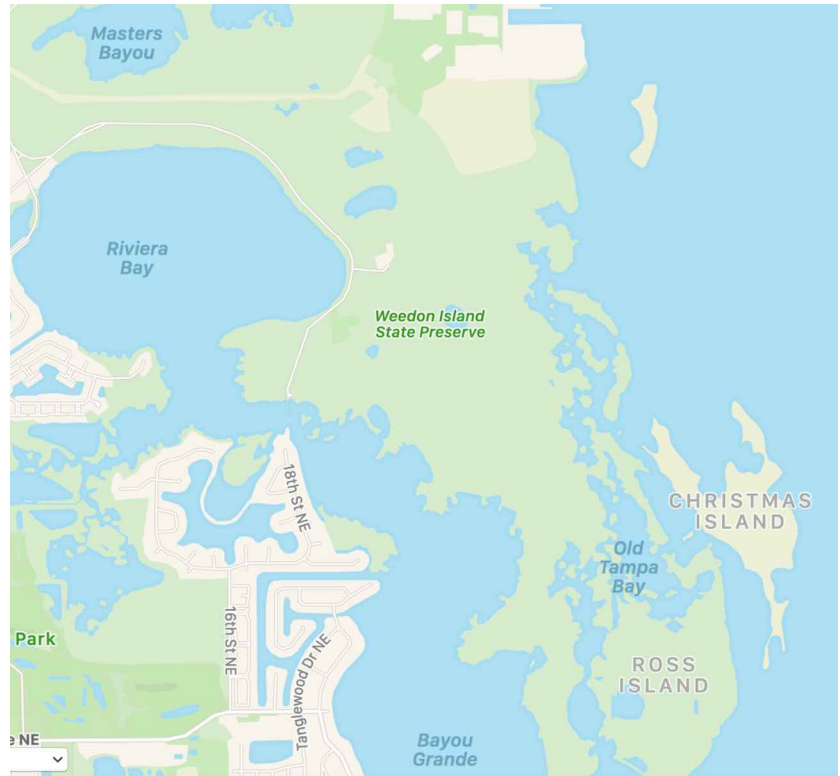
Members catching the longest snook, seatrout, and redfish win gift cards to Bill Jackson's. Measure and email pictures of your longest fish to robertburkard9@gmail.com

Kayakers: Launch near the fishing pier. Or you can rent a kayak at **Sweetwater Kayaks** on Weedon Drive near Riviera Bay.

Wade in options:

1. Wade in to Riviera Bay from Sweetwater Kayaks or other paths through the mangroves along the main road.
2. Wade in at the base of the fishing pier/kayak launch area.
3. Hike the Upland Trail to Lookout Point Trail then wade in to Tampa Bay. It's a 10 to 15-minute hike.

For safety's sake, always fish with others. Join the waders meeting up at the main parking lot at 7:00 am.



Fish anywhere around Weedon Island Preserve including Tampa Bay, Bayou Grande, Riviera Bay, and Masters Bayou (aka Snug Harbor).



Now we can pay dues and more on the SFF website

SFF Website *eShop* is Here!

You've asked for it and now you got it. Existing members as well as new members can pay their annual membership fees for both the SFF and FFI using the new *eShop* feature on the club website. You can also make donations to the club.

Here's how:

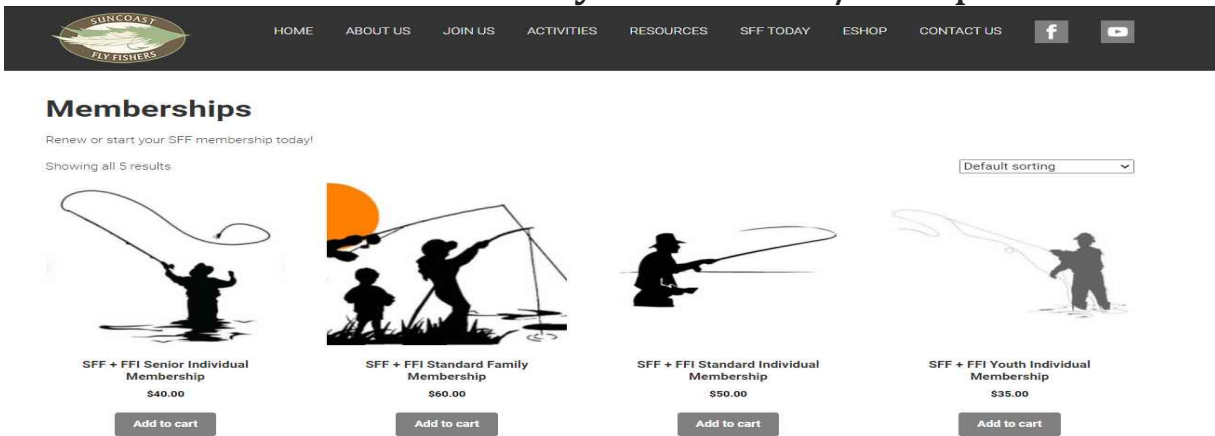
1. Go to the website – Suncoastflyfishers.com
2. Click on the **eShop** menu item at the top.
3. Select the membership fees that match your situation. View your cart to verify your selection is correct, then select proceed to checkout.
4. After selecting checkout, and if you are using it for the first time, you will need to create an account with a username and password (at least 9 characters). Enter your billing and credit card information and submit! You will receive an email confirmation. Your billing information will be remembered, so when you next checkout and login, this information will be auto-populated for you. The website will not store your credit card information.



The club has been using *Square* (ecommerce software system) for years to process your credit card payments for such things as memberships, purchases of club merchandise and auction treasures. Our website gurus have simply integrated *Square* into the website to provide an additional method for payments, pretty nifty!

Existing members should have received 2021 membership notices by email. If you have not completed your payment, you can now do it online.

www.suncoastflyfishers.com/eshop



Tom Gadacz: Meet Christina Welsh at the SFF Zoom Meeting

Suncoast Fly Fishers' 2020 scholarship winner joins us Thursday, January 21. Christina Welsh is a second year Ph.D. student researching the effects of climate warming on the populations of marine species.



Tom Gadacz

On November 8, 2019, Suncoast Fly Fishers (SFF) established the Suncoast Fly Fishers Scholarship at the University of South Florida, College of Marine Science to support a graduate student's research on the conservation, restoration, and reclamation of Tampa Bay and West Coast Florida Fisheries.

Cliff Nigh, SFF Conservation Chair, proposed this award to the SFF Board which approved its establishment and funding of the first \$500 award. Cliff and FFI President Tom Gadacz met with Laurie Scott, Director of Development at USF, to discuss the

scholarship. We stipulated that each scholarship recipient speaks about their research at an SFF membership meeting. We also discussed the opportunity for students to apply for the Fly Fisher International (FFI) Conservation Grant Program.

The USF College of Marine Science awarded the inaugural SFF scholarship to Christina Welsh, a second-year Ph.D. student studying Biological Oceanography. Christina also applied for the FFI Conservation Grant program for graduate students doing meritorious research.

The FFI Florida Council reviewed and approved Ms. Welsh's application and research proposal and sent it to David Peterson, FFI Conservation Chair for the FFI Conservation Committee's review. Christina was awarded the FFI Conservation Award of \$2,000 to support her research.

Christina's research focuses on understanding the metabolic physiology of larval fish concerning climate change. This includes measuring the amount of oxygen consumed by fish at rest and during exercise, and the minimum levels of oxygen needed for survival. By measuring these things at different temperatures, it is possible to estimate how fish populations change as seawater warms. The research will include species that are important components of recreational fisheries in Florida, like Red Drum and Spotted Seatrout.

Christina first became interested in studying marine science as an undergraduate at Stockton University, in her home state of New Jersey. Living in a small town close to the ocean showed her the value that natural resources provide to coastal communities. That was reflected in her research interests, as she participated in many projects that looked at the effects of climate change on important coastal species, including oysters, scallops, and various types of fish. Outside of school, her hobbies include running marathons and spending time with her two cats.

Cliff and I are very proud of Christina Welsh and her background and commitment to Florida marine research and look forward to hearing her speak at a future SFF membership meeting.

Tom

PS Zoom meeting link: : <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82761499392>



Cliff Nigh, SFF Conservation Committee Chairman

Tim Elms: Slow and Steady

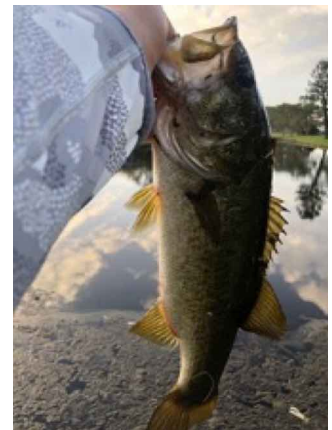


Howdy! Love it or hate it, it's that time of year where wading may be your only hope for fly fishing. Fishing for me has been quite slow. I catch a Bass almost every trip, but they too are slow and deep, probably waiting for the water to come back to consistent temps.

When the tides are super low, the cold fronts come once a week, and the bait is small; redfish and seatrout are stalking the flats, and that means you may be breaking out your waders for the first time since, well, last January.

Chances are you put on your trusty waders and in about 10 seconds you feel a pesky pin hole leak making it quite chilly and wet inside. I have a tip if you have tried to find a pin hole without any success.

- Turn the waders inside out.
- Grab a bottle of rubbing alcohol. Soak some on a rag or paper towel.
- Then start to wipe the waders as if you are just cleaning the insides.
- If you have a pin hole or small tear or seam, the alcohol will show a darker spot where the penetration is! It's that simple.
- Grab some Aqua Seal and put a small bit on it to seal up that spot. Don't patch from the outside as that layer of material is hard to seal anything on.



First bass of the year

On the last week of December, I had a quick chance to try my luck on a flat. I will be honest and say I have not wade-fished since our January 2020 outing! With so many good spots around and opportunities for fishing on a boat, I really put off my wading.

I walked in at Weedon Island on the North end and caught several decent ladyfish in a quick hour. Every time I get into a school of feeding ladyfish, I can't help but keep doing it over and over. It's too fun not to have them leap around, destroy your favorite fly, and then poop on you.

Nothing else was happening and only a small school of mullet could be seen. I decided to pack up and head to Tampa for my last hour or so and went in at Picnic Island Park. The wind had picked up and snowbirds were everywhere. I decided to make a break for a mud flat that no one else wanted to walk to. With my trusty white bait pattern in hand I was expecting a trout or two, but low and behold I finally caught a redfish on a fly while wading solo.



Drummer Boy

I really was proud when I was bringing it in and even made a few out loud cheers. Sometimes it pays off to mix it up a bit. Hope this encourages some of you to get out and fish! Stay safe and healthy!

Strip Strip Strip!-- *Tim*

Dennis Marquis: December Seatrout Blitz at Madelaine Key



It all started with the December 12 club outing. A group of us met to wade Madelaine Key, which includes the Ft. De Soto Park public boat ramp. Tony Piazza and I headed for the south point with a nice view of the RV Park across the boat channel. We fished that whole point until 10am with no action. At about that time I started to see current movement in an area back over my right shoulder that I had previously fished. It now looked more interesting and worth a second shot. Oh yeah!

First cast into the current stream and boom a nice slot trout on of course, the red rouser. Then I started to see areas of 3-5" bait leaving the water in a panic. Several times I just dropped the fly into this mayhem and had quick hookups. I got Tony's attention and he waded over and got into the action.

Now facing west with the key behind us we continued to have action for a solid hour moving slowly northward as the school moved. I fished the rouser until I lost it and tied on a thunderstruck minnow, which proved to be equally productive. I landed a half dozen nice trout, couple of 20"+ ladyfish and lost just as many. Having fished this spot for the first time, it certainly got my attention and required follow-up visits.



Tony Piazza with one of many fat seatrout he caught on outing day at Madelaine Key/Fort DeSoto Park.



Red rouser, the seatrout arouser

My nephew Matt, a fly-fisher, came up from Wellington, Florida to fish the following week. We fished the same spot, this time from my boat on Tuesday, December 15. We had steady action for two hours using a red rouser tied light with a small dumb bell eye. There had to be hundreds and hundreds of trout spread over the tip of the flat. We were getting multiple strikes with every cast. Matt thinks we landed 100 fish between us. That may have been the case, I'll confidently agree to 40+ each.

Saturday, December 19th turned out to be a better day weather wise, so Cindy and I decided to take a late afternoon trip to the same spot. We had an incoming tide and I noticed water moving around the southern tip of the key, so we quietly motored into position with the bow into the current. First cast, game on! Cindy was hooking up with a dark green and white rubber paddle tail on a ¼ ounce jig head; water was 6-8' deep in that area. I got set with my fly rod, and we had fun for about an hour. Cindy took a break, got out her binoculars and watched a nearby team of ospreys building a new nest. I continued to fish merrily singing Xmas songs and having fun. Cindy agreed that we each landed 25+ fish. I believe it was a bit more for me, as she stopped fishing. For the record, I was using a red rouser and thunderstruck again.

--Continued on next page--

P2/Dennis Marquis: December Seatrout Blitz



Ben Marquis, Dennis' older son, is an avid fly fisher and SFF member.

My older son Ben arrived December 23 for the holidays. He is a fly fisher. Christmas Eve morning found us on the water, fishing Madelaine Key and we found the trout again. Ben doesn't get to fish often; he worked the kinks out of his cast pretty quickly and had a blast. As it was Christmas eve, we promised Cindy we would make it a short trip, so after another 25+ day for each of us, we headed home. Red rouser was the fly for the day.

Ben and I went back to the same spot on the 27th. It was a bit slow, so we motored to the tip of the key where Cindy and I found the trout and we found a few. Then we slowly motored in parallel to the mangroves and would pick up a few, drift, anchor and repeat. The surprise here was fewer trout, but bigger. Most were 18"+ with a couple over the slot. We did switch from the red rouser to an olive green half n half clouser tied heavy with large dumbbell eyes, as the drop off from the mangroves was abrupt and deep. Again we promised Cindy a nearly trip, so we headed home – but as we passed by Arrowhead Picnic area we noticed several fly fishers and we could see them with bent rods. I told Ben we had time

for a 30-40-minute stop. We motored in slowly, all three were visiting and knew nothing of our club. They were having fun with the trout. Ben and I moved the boat away from them fishing on the west side of that small rock jetty. Tied the lightweight rouser back on, here we got into the trout immediately – mostly small and below slot size. All toll another 25+ day for each of us.

This was probably the most productive month of seatrout fishing ever for me, and I did it with four different people.

I continue to try and hone my skills so that I end up releasing the fish no worse for wear. Especially when landing fish in such high numbers, if you forgo diligent catch and release practices, you could do a lot of damage. I always start with a 7wt loaded with a sink tip and try to be easy on the fish. I have to use a 20lb tippet, any lighter and it won't hold up to ladyfish, mackerel, jacks, etc.

I now use mostly #4 Mustad 3407 debarbed hooks. The #2 is too big for trout less than 15", they damage the mouth too much. I also shy away from #6 size hooks as it seems that these are more easily swallowed leading to challenging hook extractions. The #4 also seems sufficient when I find slot and above slot trout, so I will stick with it until I notice a difference. I take fewer pictures, opting to use the dehooker boat side to drop the trout back into the water quickly untouched by human hands.

I am going to buy a fresh water trout landing net, one of those rubber ones so that I can use it as needed for tougher release conditions while keeping the fish in the water. If you have any other ideas, please let me know. Remember, the tug is our drug, so, as you can, **fish it!**

Dennis

Marshall Craig: Everglades Winter Snook



Marshall Craig with a nice Flamingo snook caught in early December.

The first week in December I fished in the Everglades National Park with my friends Kip and Tom from Ormond Beach. When I got a call from Kip inviting me to fish, I was pumped. He said the snook bite had been on fire in the park.

Kip, my graduate school roomie, knows whereof he speaks, having fished the Glades for 50 years. When we fish, he drives the boat and provides the knowledge of where to go. Tom and I get out the beer and fried chicken for lunch and hold the line when his Action Craft slides off the trailer at the Flamingo ramp. We are also in charge of covering the SUV with the vulture-proof tarp while it sits in the parking lot. In practice, the vultures sneer at the tarp and tear it up at will.

We fished for three days, both inside - working out of, and around Whitewater Bay - and outside - in and around the river mouths leading into Ponce de Leon Bay. We worked the mangroves and the river and bay shorelines hard, with tight casts into likely holes. Any fly or lure landing more than a foot out from a nice slot would not get rewarded. The bow fisherman, working the electric motor, and the middle fisherman cast hardware, the stern fisherman had the option of casting a fly.

We fished Clousers to get the fly to drop quickly. This is problematic because of the clutter of roots and timber littering the bottom. Snagged hooks are a fact of life. If you aren't snagging you either aren't getting the lure down, in the case of fishing the river on the outgoing tide, or getting the lure close enough to mangrove cover in the case of fishing inside.



Flamingo fly rod and Clouser used to fly fish the Everglade mangrove shorelines. If you hooked up with a mangrove root, that was a sign you were letting the fly sink, and that's a good thing.

We had a great fishing experience, in terms of numbers of snook and size with five exceptionally large ones. Kip caught the snook pictured on a 7-weight rod. The fly was a deep Clouser, tied on 1/0 hook with heavy eyes. Note the broken lateral line. Explanation?



Marshall's friend Kip caught this big snook on a fast-sinking Clouser. Note the irregular lateral line. Anyone? Anyone?

Ray Smith: New York's Salmon River

Merry Christmas and I hope this finds everyone well.

I fished the Salmon River in NY last August and played catch and release with smallmouth on a black & chartreuse wooly bugger.

It was a beautiful day. I had part of the river all to myself and it felt good putting a bend in my 5wt.



Ray

Chris O'Byrne: Holiday Bass Come in all Sizes



Chris O'Byrne with a respectable largemouth bass he caught on a Polk County lake.



That's Anna Dienes from the Andy Thornal Fly Shop in downtown Winter Haven.



Hunter Towery, Sweetwater Guide Service. He called this one a 12-foot video gamefish. Or, it could star in a new episode of River Monsters.

We had variations in the weather over Christmas Break. This was the coldest Christmas Day in 25 years, then we had higher than average temps. And a full moon in the mix made the fishing slower. But one way or the other, we found some nice ones.

Chris

Andy Constantinou: Latimer Lake in Buckinghamshire



A day on the lake at Latimer in Buckinghamshire, England. Pictures tell the story.

Andy had shoreline spectators ,too



Cheers, Andy

Bob Hood and Tony Piazza were not skunked



Bob Hood

Tony and I went out yesterday (Jan. 7) from Ruskin's Freedom Boat Club to try our luck. Lots of wind and fish

weren't cooperating. Tony caught the first one, a flounder; picture attached. I had several strikes but nothing substantial until late afternoon when we hit a small pocket of silver trout. So, I didn't get skunked. Good outing and good company.



Hood's silver trout



Piazza's "massive" flounder



Tony Piazza

Bob

Your Fish & Wildlife Officers Are On The Job*

CHARLOTTE COUNTY -- Officer Hardgrove conducted a resource inspection of a subject fishing from a pier. The inspection revealed the fisherman was in possession of two snook. One snook measured four inches and the second snook measured five inches. The fisherman was issued a notice to appear for possession of snook during a closed season. The snook were seized and returned to the water.

MANATEE COUNTY -- Officer Gonzales conducted a resource inspection of three fishermen he observed emerging from mangroves along the shoreline. Each of the fishermen possessed one snook and one spotted seatrout. The fish were seized and the fishermen were each issued a notice to appear for possession of undersize snook, possession of snook during a closed season and possession of spotted seatrout during a closed season.

PINELLAS COUNTY -- Officer Conrad conducted a fisheries inspection on a vessel returning to the Fort Desoto Boat Ramp. Two undersized gray triggerfish and one undersized scamp grouper were discovered during the investigation. Appropriate citations were issued for the offenses.

Officer Conrad observed two individuals fishing beneath a bridge and waited until they returned to their vehicle to conduct a fisheries inspection. The individuals were found to be possession of three undersized lane snapper, one undersized mangrove snapper, one undersized gulf flounder and one undersized black sea bass. The individuals were cited accordingly.

SARASOTA COUNTY -- Officer Dalton conducted a resource inspection of several fishermen fishing from a bridge. The inspection revealed one of the fishermen was in possession of a redfish. The fisherman was issued a notice to appear for possession of redfish during a closed season.

**Pinched from FWC's weekly law enforcement report*

Bruce Evensen: Ray's Fly



Bruce Evensen

This is the January Fly of the Month for the Weedon Island Preserve outing. To match the "hatch" tie this fly about 2.5 to 3.5 inches long. "Ray's Fly" is named after Ray Bondorew, author of *Stripers and Streamers*. Don Coleman calls attention to it on page 3 of his booklet, *Wading the Saltwater Flats with a Fly Rod*, which is given to every new member of Suncoast Fly Fishers.



Materials

Hook: #1 or 1/0 short shank live bait hook.

Body: Silver braid or Mylar wrap.

Wing: white, yellow, olive bucktail.

Red thread: flat waxed nylon.

Eye: Black dot -sharpie.

Tying Steps

Step 1: Wrap hook shank with thread from hook eye to hook barb.

Step 2: Wrap with silver braid or Mylar wrap.

Step 3: Tie on a sparse amount of white bucktail then two pieces of pearl flash.

Step 4: Tie on a sparse amount of yellow over the white. Yellow should be slightly longer than white. Tie two more pieces of pearl flash.

Step 5: Tie on sparse amount of olive bucktail. Should be slightly longer than the yellow.

Step 6: Make a small head of thread, use sharpie to dot on the eyes.

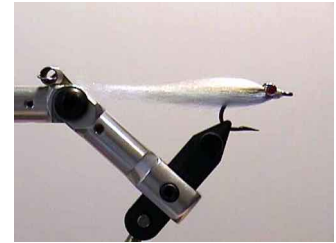
Step 7: Apply epoxy to the head.

Step 8: Go fishing.

Smitty's Fly Box: Polar Express



This is an easily-tied fly. Basically it's a Clouser tied with Success Flies Polar Fiber material. I have caught a ton of fish on these type flies and they work great! The synthetic material allows the fly to sink instantly and it dries out on a single back cast. You can tie it in various colors to "match the hatch" i.e. grey/white (whitebait), olive/white (greenbacks) and brown/tan/white (baby mullet) etc. etc.



Smitty

Materials

Hook: Eagle Claw NT 156 in size 1/0 (or any similar short-shank hook)

Thread: Clear Monofilament thread

Eyes: Chrome Barbell w/ painted eyes

Body: White Polar Fibre over Grey Polar Fibre

Flash: Pearl Micro Flashabou or Krystal Flash

Wing: Blue Polar Fibre

Head: Thread wraps in cone shape

Cement: UV Resin or SHHAN

Tying sequence

Step 1: Begin with an Eagle Claw # NT156 in 1/0 (or similar short shank hook). De-barb the hook (this is easier to do at the tying bench than it is on the water and if you break it here you merely need another hook and not an entire fly) and place it in the vise jaws securely. Using clear monofilament for thread lay down a base coat of thread and secure the eyes (I used lead eyes painted silver here, the choice in eye design and color is up to you) using an X pattern. I place the eyes directly between the hook eye and the hook point. The eye size is determined by the size of the hook and the sink rate needed. Apply a drop of glue to the eyes to ensure they stay where you want them. Bring the monofilament forward in front of the eyes.

Step 2: Tie in the middle body section. For this fly, I used gray as a middle color with no flash (if you want flash this is the place to add it). Using the hook length (from the eye to the bend) trim a small bundle of gray that is 1½ times the length of the hook. Anchor the material forward of the eyes and trim any excess fibers at an angle. Wrap a few wraps to secure material. I use only one wrap behind the eyes to secure the material (it provides a better profile rather than several wraps after the eyes). Add a bundle of white that is ¼" longer than the gray material (2 times the hook length). Secure and trim as above.

Step 3: Rotate the vise 180 degrees so the material you just added is on the bottom of the fly. Add the top color or back color of the fly. I used blue for this fly (remember the back should be darker than the bottom). The back should be 3 times the length of the hook. Attach the blue bundle to the hook. Secure all thread wraps forward of the eyes and trim as needed. I add a dot of color to the eyes and trim the fly to the shape that I like. Wrap the head area (forward of the eyes) so the head is cone shaped. Secure the thread with a whip finish or two. Glue the head with UV Resin or SHHAN.

Step 4: Insert the fly into a Styrofoam block or other material and allow it to dry overnight. Make any final modifications to the shape of the fly after it has dried thoroughly. Comb or brush the fly to blend the material colors together and make a sleeker profile. One of the best ways I know to make this fly come to life in the water is use a loop knot connection. Here I use a No Name Knot loop connection to attach the fly to the leader. Any loop knot will work, as long as it is tied correctly. After I tie the knot I use a drop of Fishin' Glue to ensure that my knot holds.

Capt. Pat Damico: Captain's Corner

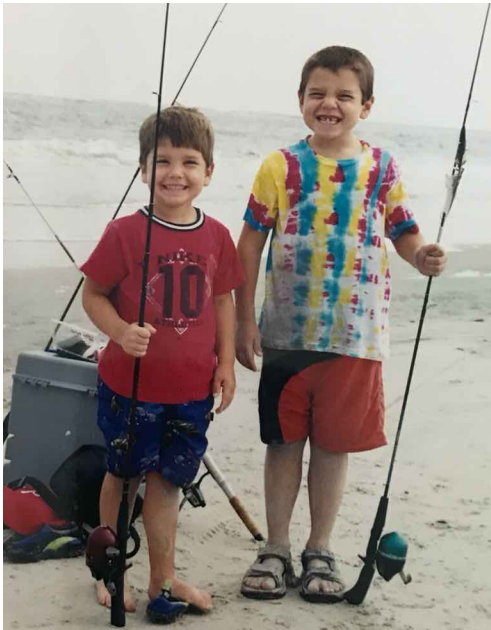


Problem: Solutions -- Cold water, stiff winds

Fly fishing conditions can be more challenging this time of year because of cold fronts, colder water, significant wind from different directions and fish that just don't seem very interested in our offerings. Starting early on a low-tide cold morning is an exciting invitation for some fly fishers and for others a good reason to stay home. Either decision is usually based on past experience. Find a protected area free from people and boating activity. A flat that has been productive at other times of the year would be a good start. There has never been a better time to be very stealthy. If sunny, have the sun behind you to improve visibility, being careful of your shadow. Disturbances in the shallows will indicate the presence of your quarry, usually redfish, trout, and occasionally sheepshead. Nervous water, wakes, scattering small baitfish, slow-waving exposed tails and schools of mullet deserve your attention. Abandoning your flats boat can be useful. Canoes and kayaks get you shallower and keep your profile and shadow low, making wading often your best option. A line tied to your waist can bring your paddle craft with you, saving a hike back to an anchored boat. Use a good floating saltwater tapered 7 weight fly line to match your rod. A tapered 12 foot leader to 12 or 15 pound test should be attached to your favorite size 4 crab or shrimp imitation that is your confidence fly. Casts must be quick and careful, the first one always being the best. A slow natural presentation is the most productive.

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

Then and Now. Once a fisher always a fisher.



Far left, that's Dennis Marquis sons Wes and Ben as boys of a certain age. Ben's on the right.

On the photo on the right, that's Ben again, all grown up, with a nice seatrout he caught fishing with his dad while visiting in December.

Niner: What is she thinking?

*I don't know if it's the white or green
That makes her want to eat my things.
She's working hard not to see my fly
But she can't turn her eye.
I wish to God I could figure it out.
I wish I knew what she was thinking about.
I wish to God I didn't sleep way past quarter to nine.*

--niner

(Niner? Inspired by songster Tyler Childers)

Fly Gear for Sale or Swap

Barry Salzman is selling his Simms waders. Just \$125. Email Salzman@tampabay.rr.com

These are Simms Freestone waders. \$125. Size Large. Original price \$279. Excellent condition. No leaks. No repairs. Used infrequently.

Tim Elms has lowered the price on a few SFF logo fishing shirts with the jumping snook design. Email

trelms@yahoo.com

Machine wash and dryable. If you want one, he'll deliver it to you or meet you half-way. Non hooded (XXL only) is light grey. Priced at \$18. White hooded shirts are L and XL priced at \$35. One XXL has a small stain. That one goes for \$20.



Price lowered from \$1,500 to \$900 -- Ocean kayak and extras from Frank Moss. Call 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. \$900

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

Bill Scarola: *Moray* Fish Puns for the New Year



Bill Scarola

*There are some FISH-ous rumors
that these puns aren't real.
I can assure you they are o-FISH-al!
Y'all have met your NEMO-sis!
I am HOOKED on them.
Some are KRACKEN me up!!*

Did you see Tom Hanks' new movie is the "DAVINCI COD"?

You'll have to yell, said one fisherman to another. "I'm hard of HERRING!"

*I've been HERRING rumors that we need MORAY puns.
I do these just for the HALIBUT!
OPAH-lease, COD I get an Amen?*

What's a new year resolution? Something that goes in one YEAR and out the other.

*They say New York City has the best new year's celebrations.
but every year they DROP THE BALL!*

*So, then, where do SMART kids do their math homework on new year's eve?
ANSWER: TIMES SQUARE!!*

I think I'll FIN-ish now!

So stop FLOUNDER-ing and go fishing!

Bill

From Upjoke.com

Why was the movie about fly fishing a flop?

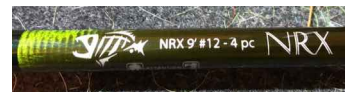
Answer: Bad casting

Bill AuCoin : Flyfisher Flyover



Which type of fly line is best for you? There are four considerations: the size of your fly. The size of the fish you want to catch. The fishing conditions. And your skill as a fly caster. (Midcurrent)

How about a fly rod to catch tarpon? -- Suncoast Fly Fisher Scott Russell sent a nice letter to Santa. Or somebody. Cliff Nigh at St. Pete Fishing Outfitters slid down the chimney, so to speak. (Gloomis)



Our January 23 outing is at Weedon Island Preserve. Whether you wade fish or fish from a yak or a boat, Weedon Island Preserve is one of the best spots for winter fishing in Tampa Bay. Redfish big and small are there. Big seatrout and snook, too. And the ladyfish are amazing. Here's some input from another source. (Florida fishing insider)

Or, travel to this hot spot. Lake Winnebago is a hot spot (sarc) at this time of the year. For sturgeon spearing fanatics. You can hire a guide. You can rent an ice shack. But please be careful. During a February 2012 fishing tournament on Lake Winnebago, 36 vehicles broke through the ice. And in 2011 12 or so vehicles plunged through the ice and one man died. (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel)



Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel

What do these people have in common? Billy Pate Jr. Al Pflueger, Jr., Tom Evans. Jack Brothers. Jimmie Albright. And who was the "hub from which all the spokes on the tarpon fly fishing wheel emanate?" Hint: Stu. (Angler's Journal)

Uh oh. Marco Island. Fort Myers Beach. Isn't this too early in the year for *Karenia brevis*? Well, let's all keep an eye on it. Noses, too. (WINK)

And we have a winner -- Tip of the club's hat to member Toni Fernstrom who has called our attention to the *Insect of the Year* award going to the Danish green drake mayfly, officially the *Ephemera Danica*. Toni, who is from Sweden, wrote, "Although I have mixed feelings about Danes, as a fly angler I have to acknowledge the significance of appointing the *Ephemera Danica*, especially since the hatch, that takes place in May/June is a major event among fly fishers in the entire Scandinavia." Tack, Toni. (NPR)

Are we a fly fishing club with a photography disorder? Here are some tips to take better pictures with your smart phone. New Year resolution for all club members: Please, shoot more pictures of fish, fellow fly fishers, and the scenery, too. Email them to me at wmaucoin@verizon.net. (Expert Photography)

So, is this what they think fly casting looks like? Did you watch the fly fishing scene Season 4 of *The Crown*? Yeah, it was awful. Really, worse than awful. Embarrassingly awful. This is the pushback. If you want to see how bad it looks, I think you have to watch Episode 1, Season 4, on Netflix. (Slate)

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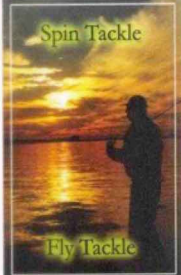
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