

On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg

Andy Mill: His Life on the Fly.....P8 -14



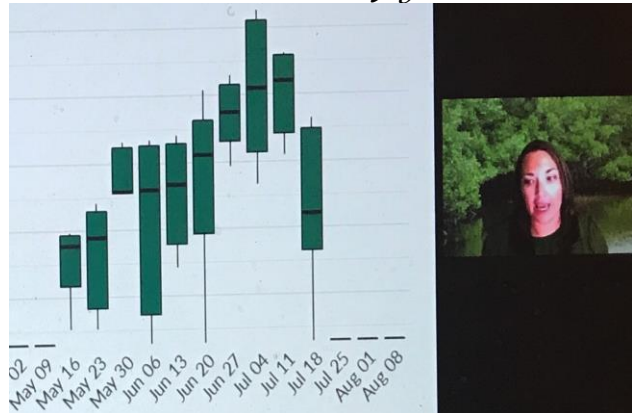
Leigh West: Catch big reds.....P3



September 18 --Fresh and/or Salt...P3, 5



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Smitty's Foxee Redd Clouser..... P16



Scarola's Jumping Jack Flash.....P15



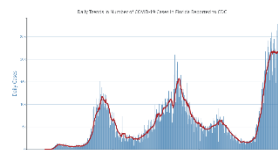


President's Letter, September 2021

Fall is in the air, and it is time to start thinking about shallow water fly fishing for some of the areas greatest game fish, Snook and Redfish. Our guest speaker at this month's member meeting is Leigh West and this fishery is one of his specialties.

Fall is also the time to start our SFF membership renewal drive. Soon you will receive a personalized renewal invitation, by email, that will detail your membership information and your renewal rate. I really appreciate the support that all our members have given to the club over the past 18 months. We have retained a strong membership base. Our loyal members continue to stick with the club even though we have had to scale back some of our activities. In addition, we have welcomed many new members that have joined despite the difficulties presented by the Corona Virus. Remember the easiest way to pay your dues is to use the E Shop portal on our website, [eShop - Suncoast Fly Fishers](#).

I truly believe that the current state of the Corona Virus is temporary. The data shows that we are turning the corner on the infection rate, and I am hopeful that we will be back to in-person meetings and events in the very near future.



I know you will enjoy this edition of *On The Fly*. Bill AuCoin has put together another outstanding publication that illustrates the best of what SFF has to offer and Tim Elms has published a terrific informative and entertaining interview with Andy Mill.

I hope to see you at our member meeting on ZOOM and our outing on Saturday. You might even learn how to catch that Redfish that has been eluding you for too long to mention.

Stay safe and keep fishing!

Rick

Rick Warfel, SFF President

Meetings, Outings, and More

Thursday, September 16-meeting on Zoom, 7 pm

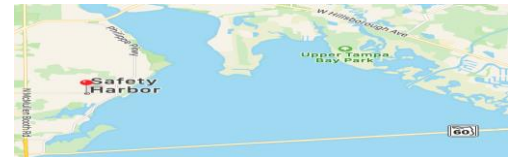
- Our speaker is Leigh West from the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club
- Leigh will share his secrets about how to catch big snook and redfish in Tampa Bay. He'll cover flies, locations, how to spot fish, and how to present the fly to them.
- Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82761499392>



Leigh West, our September speaker

September 18 Outing: Fish Freshwater or Saltwater in Upper Tampa Bay. No picnic.

- \$10 gift cards will go to members catching the longest snook, redfish, bass, and bream. Measure. Take pictures. Email them to Bob Burkard. robertburkard9@gmail.com



Fish freshwater or saltwater anywhere north of the Courtney Campbell Causeway.

Tie Bill Scarola's Fly of the Month – Jumping Jack Flash

- While Bruce Evensen recovers from Covid we'll not be meeting in person and we won't do Zoom fly tying this month either. It's DIY month.
- This is a good fly for fishing the fresh or the salt and our September outing is an either/or.



Bill Scarola's Jumping Jack Flash

Plan ahead: More 2021-2022 outings, expos, parties, and picnics to come

- September 16: Zoom meeting. Speaker, Leigh West
- September 18: Outing. Fish fresh or salt north of the Courtney Campbell Causeway
- October 21: Zoom meeting. Speaker TBA
- October 23: Carl Hanson Memorial on the Hillsborough River
- November 5-7: Fly Fishers International Virtual Expo
- November 18: Meeting. Possibly in person. Speaker, Capt. Ray Markham
- November 20: Outing. Boca Ciega Bay. Picnic (a maybe) at Bay Pines War Vets Memorial Park
- December 4 (probably): Christmas Party (covid willing)
- December 18: Don Coleman Invitational, Fort De Soto Park. Picnic is a maybe.
- January 8: Free casting clinic with Master Casting Instructors Dayle Mazzarella and Capt. Pat Damico
- January 20, 2022. Trash 'n' Treasures meeting in person or on Zoom.
- January 22, 2022: Outing, Weedon Island Preserve
- February 19, 2022. Outing, Fort DeSoto Park
- March Hog Roast. Date/location to be determined. We need a chairperson to manage this. Anybody?

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

[Monthly Calendar](#)

[Facebook.com/scff2020](https://www.facebook.com/scff2020)

Online Pay Portal: Pay dues, donate, purchase

<https://suncoastflyfishers.com/eshop/>

Membership update

Suncoast Fly Fishers now has 138 members including 16 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.

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, 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

Hog Roast: Open

Membership: Tom Gadacz

New Members: Rick Warfel

Webmaster: Tim Elms

Facebook: Cliff Nigh, Anne Mitchell

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 Mitchell

On The Fly

Bill AuCoin, editor; Anne Mitchell, Bob Hood, Tim Elms, Marshall Craig.

Bob Burkard: September 18 -- Upper Tampa Bay Outing

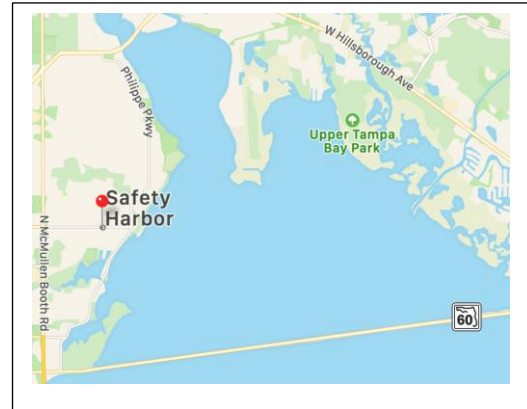


The September outing is ON. And you get to fish the salt or the fresh.

Alas, there is no picnic. When will start having outing picnics again? Maybe November. Maybe not. Only Covid knows.

But we can socially distance on the water, and whoop and holler when we catch

something.



You can fish the salt or the fresh anywhere north of the Courtney Campbell Causeway. \$10 gift cards will go to members catching the longest snook, redfish, bass, and bream. Measure. Take pictures. Email them to me at robertburkard9@gmail.com.

Salty Waders: Waders meet up at 7:30 am with Bill AuCoin and other salty wade fishers at Phillippe Park in Safety Harbor. Park your car close to Pavilion 2. That'll give you quick access to the Tampa Bay shoreline and it looks like there are some depth changes and sea grasses that hold fish.

Fresh pond pounders: Some freshwater anglers are meeting up at 8 am to fly fish the pond at Coopers Bayou Park. It has produced bass, panfish and even snook. (Just ask Tim Elms). Karen Warfel won the longest fish award in April with a 13+ inch bass. This pond is on your right heading northeast toward downtown Safety Harbor on N. Bayshore Blvd.

Yakkers. Slide your kayak in where you want to. There are lots of slide-in areas in Upper Tampa Bay.

Motorboaters have several saltwater launch options. Here's a [helpful link](#). Or, email Bill Scarola at Scar7765@gmail.com. Also, there's an Alligator Lake launch at the Safety Harbor City Park. Member Terry Kirkpatrick has fished this lake many times. He loves the points and inflows. His favorite flies are a size 10 Spider and an olive sparkle woolly bugger.

Leaders on the 2021 Outing Tournament Trail

Species	Length (inches)	Winner	Outing (Month)
Longest black bass	18	Tim Elms	Freshwater (March)
Longest bream	11	Tim Elms	Freshwater (March)
Longest Mayan cichlid	11.5	Tim Elms	Freshwater (March)
Longest snook	28	Mark Hays	Docklights/beaches (June)
Longest redfish	25	Bob Burkard	Docklights/beaches (June)
Longest ladyfish	19.5	Mark Hays	Fort De Soto Park (Feb)
Longest seatrout	20	Tim Elms	Fort De Soto Park (Feb)

Bob

Bob Burkard: August Outing at Lake Seminole Park

Lake Seminole Park was perfect. Except the fish didn't get the memo. Yeah, slow and slower.

It wasn't a total flop. Mark Hays caught two ladyfish -- one was 12-inches-- in one of the smaller lakes. They flopped, but in a nice way.

Rick Warfel got hits and actually hooked up with a couple of panfish but they got off the hook when Rick pulled them over, under, and through the shoreline weeds.

James Davis worked hard but, at the end of the day, he didn't hook up with any fish "on the end of my line."

Ditto Bob Hood, Claude Neidlinger, Bill AuCoin, and Anne Mitchell. Anne had a fish roll on her fly. A small tarpon, maybe. Oh well.



Mark Hays with one of his ladyfish



We had some guests, too. Ed Fitzgerald brought his son Holden (on the right) and Holden's friend Max. They didn't catch anything either, but these 15-year-olds earned high marks for their fly rod casting skills. Come again, guys.

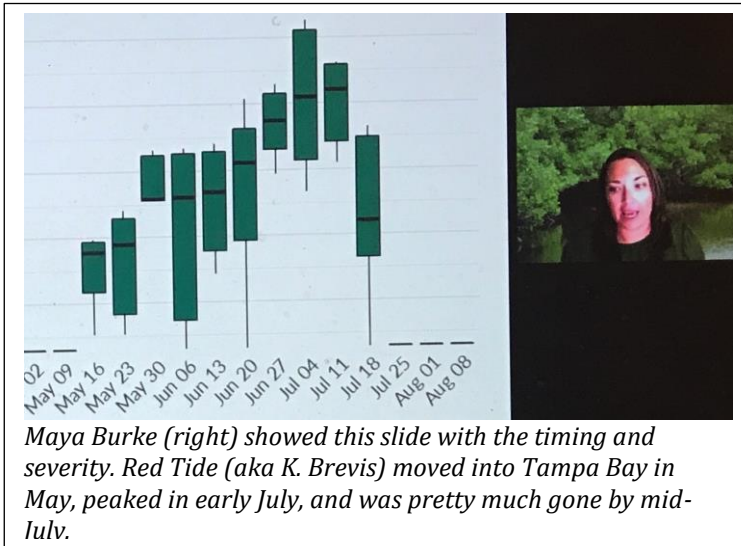
Bob



James Davis looks like he's casting to his left but he's actually casting right. He's carefully watching and controlling his backcast. Spanish Moss and low hanging branches were not our friends.

Bill AuCoin: Tampa Bay Estuary Program's Red Tide Update

Yes, it's been quite a summer for Tampa Bay. Pollution. Red Tide. Tons of dead fish. It'll be a summer to remember, but not in a good way.

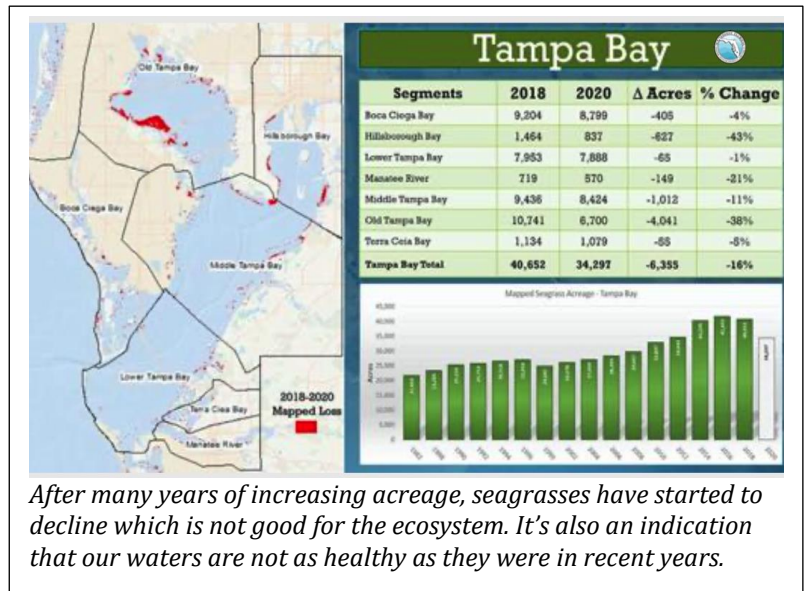


Our August meeting speaker on Zoom was Maya Burke, Assistant Director of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program. **TBEP** has been gathering data and documenting what happened. It's what they do, part of their mission to inform and bring together public and private entities to restore and protect Tampa Bay.

Burke led members through the sequence of events from bad to worse to much worse. It's better now but the hard work continues. There are ticking time bombs. How can we stop this from happening again? How can we stop fertilizer runoff, etc.

Burke discussed how Red Tide moved into the bay in May. It had lots of nutrients to feed on because in late March/early April 200-million-plus gallons of nitrogen-loaded wastewater was discharged into the bay. That was caused by a leak from the Piney Point phosphate reservoir near Port Manatee. Then, in early July, tropical storm Elsa moved up the Gulf and its southwest winds pushed the red tide algae way up into upper Tampa Bay. This killed tons of marine life. Literally: 1,755 tons of dead fish were removed.

After many years of increasing acreage in Tampa Bay five seagrasses have started to decline. It's too soon to tell, but it's likely that the Piney Point pollution and the red tide accelerated the decline and most certainly they continue to threaten the health of the bay, as does pollution from other sources.



TBEP will continue to monitor hazards, chart the data, and keep the decision-makers informed. But what can we do to help the cause? Stay informed. Stop or at least cut back on fertilizing lawns. Buy the Tampa Bay Estuary "Tarpon Tag" license plate for our cars. And if you would like to get involved and support a TBEP project, contact Myra Burke. Her email address is mburke@tbep.org

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Tim Elms: Interview with Andy Mill



Andy Mill (l) and Suncoast Fly Fisher Tim Elms have had some upbeat and informative talks on Zoom. Andy Mill, the former snow ski Olympian (yeah, that guy) is a broadcaster, author (A Passion for Tarpon), and has won 14 major fly fishing tournaments including 12 tarpon, one permit, and one bonefish tournament.

Howdy! Usually, I would be writing about Snook and Juvi Poon, (and yes, they are still all over the place) but back in July, I got to sit down on ZOOM with Andy Mill. Ever since he presented to our club, we have kept in contact and share pleasantries with each other. Andy agreed to let me shoot as many questions as I could at him. I never thought we would go over two hours, but he is by far the most open book fly fisherman I have ever talked to. Andy can be considered the top tournament fly angler of all time with 14 wins in the majors including five Gold Cups and could not be a nicer dude. I would have published the video, but Andy and I are known to use inappropriate language, drink a few adult

beverages, and just plain banter with each other. This is a shortened version of everything we talked about. As you could imagine we interrupted ourselves with anecdotes and many jokes along the way.

Speaking with Andy is so easy. I know for a fact he has accomplished his goal of being a *nice man*. If you watch or listen to Andy he will always use the fun nicknames of people. He calls me Timmy. I don't let that many people call me Timmy but the way Andy does it is so endearing, only my late Grandpa called me that and he passed from Corona last year, and Andy says it the exact way Grandpa did. If you haven't started to listen to the [MILL HOUSE](#) podcast you are missing some of the greatest fishermen -- they're mostly fly anglers but not always -- tell the most amazing stories. It's a Florida *must listen*. **SO HERE WE GOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!**

Tim: Hey, guy! Good to see you again and thanks so much for doing this for me and my club. Let's get going as I have a ton of questions for you. But tell me about this hat. I see you in this hat all the time.

Andy: Thanks, Tim. This hat, I bought a long, long time ago and it's become a big part of me. It's a 4x beaver, so it's pretty waterproof. I wear it all summer and fall in Aspen. I want to be cremated with it. A large part of my best life I was wearing it. I killed some great elk with it on. Many mornings it's on before my underwear...

Tim: Great, so this is one of my questions, would you consider yourself superstitious?

Andy: Only once, and it turned out to be the greatest win of my life! It was during one of the Gold Cups, the most important tarpon tournament in the world. It was the last day of the five-day event. We were on the starting grid waiting for the horn to blow signaling when we could push the throttle down and race an hour and a half to where we usually fish. There were five fleets of five boats leaving at two-minute intervals. Every day we would rotate so everyone had a chance to leave first. We were idling, waiting for the horn when the late Kenny Collette yelled over to me that I had to go move my truck...I asked why? He said my parking spot had bad Mojo on it! Really, I responded, and he said, no question. I instantly knew he was messing with me. He then said I'm normally in the top three going into the last day and this year we were in last place. I thought for a bit.

Tim's interview with Andy Mill continues on the following pages

Andy: Yes, we were in last place, the week contained terrible weather and we had horrible luck with all our big fish falling off the hook. I wasn't going to take a chance. I told Timmy Hoover, my guide, to take me to the dock. He was irritated and didn't want to waste the time. I dug my tackle bag out of the front hatch as he motored over to the dock.



Once there I jumped out of the boat and ran to my truck. The horn had now blown and all the boats were now racing to their spots. I moved my truck as far away from where it was parked as I could. When I got back to the boat I told Hoover that all week we were struggling, but today we had great weather. The leaders were only 1,400 points ahead of us. (In this tournament you received 10 points per pound for a fish over 70 pounds). I told him if he finds the fish I'd catch them and we were going to win this thing. That day we had five bites and caught all five, the largest was a 115-pound fish. We caught three on the ocean. Ran into a basin and caught a fatty, the 115. I told Timmy we needed one more to have a chance. He said we've lost the tide but there still might be a couple in Log Jam. We ran there and found one laid up on the edge. We caught him too! Four of the five fish we caught were over 70 pounds. We beat Rob Fordyce and Carlos Duncan at the buzzer. No one had ever caught four weight fish (fish over 70 pounds) before or since. Superstitious? Only once....

I love deeply so I've pursued everything as hard as I know how.

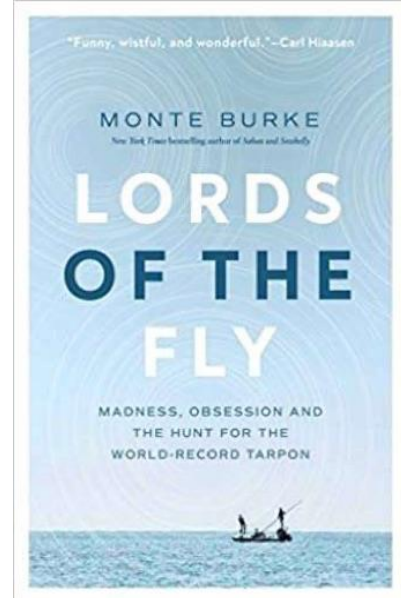
Tim: I'm happy when I land three bass. Who is Andy Mill as a fly angler? And do you want to be known as a fly angler, a pro skier, or a historian of our sport? (With your podcast)

Andy: Oh man. I'd like to be known as a great father and husband first! I know I was ok at quite a few sports but those are a distant second. I love deeply so I've pursued everything as hard as I know how. I'm extremely proud of my fishing success, and those don't come without great guides. I won 14 big events with six different guides. I can't catch what's not there. They're like my family members.

I really feel what my son and I are currently doing with our podcast, [Millhouse podcast](#), is extremely important. We are preserving the history of our sport. Stories die with icons unless they're saved. And for the rest of time they'll be remembered for their greatness on our Podcast now. I'm the luckiest guy alive that's been blessed with an extraordinary life.

Andy: An example of preserving history and storytelling is one with Tom Evans and the greatest tarpon story ever told. Monte Burke, a National Best-Selling author, came and did a story on me for Garden and Gun Magazine. <https://gardenandgun.com/feature/the-heart-of-an-angler/>

After a few days of fishing and hanging with Tom Evans I realized he was the guy to write the legendary story of Homosassa. Homosassa was where all the monster tarpon swam and where everyone speculated the 200-pound Holy Grail would be caught, and eventually did. It was an era of a mobster, drugs, and eccentrics that fished every day the full month of May. I asked Monte what his commission is to write a book. He gave me that number and I told him I'd find it. I went to Tom Evans, the greatest big game fisher of all time. He still holds the 12-pound test tarpon record of 194 pounds. He broke Pate's 188 with a 191-pound fish on 16#. I told him with his financial success he needs to fund this all-important book. After over 75 interviews and a few years of research the book got written. Monte's book, Lords of The Fly, will go down as the most accurate, documented history of all the players to ever chase big tarpon. It's a must read by anyone who likes saltwater fly fishing. This is similar to what we are trying to do with our Millhouse Podcast.



Tim: What's Evans like? He seems like the most intense and interesting guy.

Andy: Tom Evans is raw and brutally honest. I love the cat.... He's the greatest big fish catcher of all time and his records prove that! Try a 194-pound tarpon on 12-pound test. A 191 on 16. How about a 273-pound blue marlin on 16? Right!!!! He's the real deal!

Tim: You fish with some of the most famous people in the world, including President Bush '41 for a long time. Right? Who's your favorite famous person you ever fished with?



President George H. W. Bush

Andy: It must be President Bush Senior, the most famous person I ever fished with and my favorite. President Bush 41. How can you be more famous than the President? Also, he was extremely cool. He had a great sense of humor! Every day with him was filled with activities. When we were at Kennebunkport we'd fish for stripers early, golf in the afternoon, and return to barbecuing, horseshoes, and a beer or two.

"He was a wonderful friend that cared deeply for not only me but my family. He and Chrissie were very close. He inducted her into the tennis hall of fame and wrote the foreword to my book."

Andy: President Bush and I fished 20 years together. At 80 years old he asked me to help him catch a big tarpon. Captain George Woods and I helped him with his dream fish, a 140 pounder. We fished around the world together. I did a TV show with him in the Arctic Circle fishing for arctic char. He asked me to go rooster fishing with him in Panama once. I flew to Houston and spent the night with him and Barbara at their home. The next day we flew to Panama and met up with their President. We boarded three military helicopters and flew to the Island of Coiba where Carlos Slim, the billionaire from Mexico, had his mothership waiting for us, along with three other vessels and captains to help with our mission.

He was a wonderful friend that cared deeply for not only me but my family. He and Chrissie were very close. He inducted her into the tennis hall of fame and wrote the foreword to my book. We were at Camp David with him when Kuwait was invaded. That in itself is an incredible, historical story. We also stayed a few times at the White House. I miss them greatly.

Tim: Tell me how you got involved with Hardy fly rods and reels?

Andy: Twelve years ago, the president of Hardy, Jim Murphy, came to me and asked if I'd be willing to help them produce a competitive saltwater rod and reel. At the time I'd just retired from tournament fishing. I knew what they needed.

The rods they had at the time were extremely old school and terrible, just awful. I said I could help, but they needed to be serious and willing to spend some money. They were and I signed a contract which is still in place today.

Their main rod designer, Howard Croston, and I got together, fished and consulted with each other. 3M had just come out with a new resin called Syntrex. which has small nano silica particles in it that become stronger when they're pushed against each other, like on the inside of a bent rod. This resin enabled us to



Andy's Rooster this year

build not only a lighter rod but a much more durable rod. It was an instant success. We also built the first Fortuna reel which had a large arbor and a disc drag capable of 30 pounds of drag. Not that you'd ever use that much but it was a great selling point, and available if you wanted to fish outside of the confines of IGFA fly fishing regulations which limits you to fishing 20-pound class tippet or less. With our first prototype rod and reels Craig Brewer and Thane Morgan won the Gold Cup. Over the next twelve years Hardy's was the most successful tournament rod in the Florida Keys. This year Hardy had the top seven places in the Gold Cup.

Tim: Why do you use a 10-weight for tarpon and not a 12 or 13?

Andy: I use 10 and 11 weights for tarpon. They cast better than twelve weight rods, especially into the wind. The thickness of a 12-weight fly line is aerodynamically awful. The best wind rod is a 10 weight. Go out and throw a 10,11, and 12 weight into a 20 mile per hour wind. The 10 will win every time. I like the 11 better for pulling on big animals, but also on calm days the 10 has a softer presentation. So, my go to rod is an 11, but I'll also have a couple 10's in my boat.



Tim: I know tarpon are your number one, but do you like to fish for anything else besides trout back in Aspen.

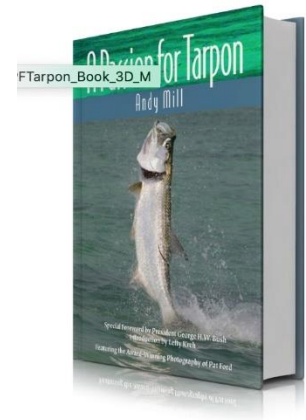
Andy: Absolutely. I like it all. Sure, I love Tarpon like everyone else, but trout, carp, bonefish, permit, rooster fish, they're all great. I'm not a big fan of offshore stuff because I get seasick. If I had one last fish to catch it would probably be wading for a 14-pound tailing bonefish or a 30-pound permit. I love wading! It's just you, the water, sky, breeze and fish... No boat, no one's in your ear, it's as organic as it gets. Maybe my son is next to me but I'd be wading somewhere remote in the world.

Tim: Are you going to write another book like [A Passion for Tarpon](#)?

Andy: I don't know. We're talking about compiling some of our Millhouse Podcast interviews into a book. It's not about the money. It's about preserving history with these iconic stories.

Tim: How do you remember all the fish, weights, tippets, and dates?

Andy: I only know all the tarpon records because that fish has been my life for the last 40 years. I was obsessed with this fish and winning tournaments. I was never really about chasing records. I tried the 6 pound a few times and caught an 82-pound 4-ounce fish, which missed Stu Apte's long standing 82.8 by 4 ounces. But I know all the record holders very well. They're good friends of mine.



Tim: Do you want to chase a record still?

Andy: No, that's not my bag. I only want to fish for fun now and pole my boat with Nicky on the bow. But if I did pursue records, it would be a quest similar to Tom Evan's pursuit, which was catching the largest fish ever caught on fly. Fish that are quality game fish. Not some mud suckers that no one cares about. A small fish that weighs 50 percent of the breaking strength of your tippet may be a record but in my book that's a lame record.

Tim: What's worse, a bad cast or a fouled fly?

Andy: Fouled fly. With a bad cast your fly is still working for you, but a fouled fly and you're just out of the game.

Tim: Is it the fly pattern or is it the way you wiggle your worm?

Andy: Well, I always want to feed a fish. So yeah. Feeding fish is about how you wiggle your worm.... Very rarely do you ever cast and just start stripping your fly. You might slide the fly until you see that the fish sees your bug, but then you may bump it, pause... bump, bump, pause etc. That's how the greats get tricky fish to eat their bugs. Remember, good fishermen can catch a lot of fish, big fish too. But the greats can catch the fish that doesn't want to get caught. The same with guides. The best ones can find the fish that are not easily found.

Tim: If you're blind casting, how do you do that?

Andy: If I'm blind-casting I am always thinking the fish is right behind my fly and I know what they like and how to feed them. So, I always want to be, "Wiggling my worm"

Tim: Favorite weight rod?

“My favorite rod is the one piece 11 weight Zane Pro Hardy. It’s not only the best casting rod on the planet, but it’s the best fishing rod.”

Andy: Aww, that’s impossible. Trout? Ha ha. My favorite rod is the one piece 11 weight Zane Pro Hardy. It’s not only the best casting rod on the planet, but it’s the best fishing rod. You may want to know what’s the difference? The best fishing rod is one that gets the fly quickest to the fish whether the fish is at 30 feet from the boat or 80. Rods that are too stiff in the tip will throw a long way but struggle delivering the fly at a close range. The stiffer tip won’t turn over a 15-foot leader very well with a fish that’s close. My Hardy rods do it all well.

Tim: Do you always comply with IGFA rules?

Andy: The only IGFA rule I break is the length of my bite tippet. Often, when we’re testing new flies and I need to tie several of them on, I’ll use a longer bite tippet than the 12 inches we’re allowed. This will save time and monofilament. But we never fish more than the maximum 20-pound class allowed. Last year Nicky (Andy’s son) caught a 180 pounder on 16.

Tim: Speaking of Nicky, is he going to fish the Gold Cup next year?

Andy: No not yet. He’s waiting for the right guide. And they’re not available yet. He will soon enough.

Tim: What’s your preferred bite tippet?

Andy: 40 to 50-pound test. and during tournaments we used 60 a lot.

Tim: What’s your preferred fly line?

Andy: My favorite ocean tarpon fly line is the Cortland 9-foot Ghost tip. I like the 9-footer better than the 14-footer. With the 9 foot I can pick it up when it’s still 20 to 30 feet away from the boat and recast it. The 14-footer I have to strip it all the way back to the boat before recasting it. The 9-footer is a much faster fishing line. I used to fish the all clear, but I lose my fly too much with an all clear fly line. With a 9-foot clear tip and a 15-foot leader I have 24 feet of clear material which still allows me to cut strings of tarpon very effectively.

Tim: Leader builds, line? Knots?

Andy: My leader is built with a 50- or 60-pound monofilament butt off the fly line tied with a seven-turn Albright. I pull the first three wraps over the end of the fly line before tightening it, which helps taper the knot. I have six feet of that. I then I tie 40-pound monofilament to the end of that with a blood knot. This should be at least three to four feet long. I then tie my class tippet to the 40 pound with an improved blood knot. My class is usually 16-pound Mason and I have it shoulder width in length. The other end of my class tippet is tied with another improved blood knot to my bite tippet. The bite tippet can be no longer than 12 inches when you’re record or tournament fishing. I tie my fly on with an improved Homer Rhode loop knot. I use a variety of Fluorocarbon for my bite. It’s thinner and harder than monofilament which works better with a hard mouth, chasing fish like a tarpon.



Andy with his son Nicky, his fishing/hunting buddy and Millhouse Podcast partner.

Tim: Do you ever use a spin rod?

Andy: Well, yes. I use spinning rods when fly rods are not suited. Like fishing with live mullet or if I'm blind casting for fish. I hate blind casting unless there are a lot of fish around and you're getting a pile of bites.

Tim: Do you ever use a Clouser minnow?

Andy: Yeah, sure. Well, when its appropriate... I love Bob Clouser. He's one of the greats in our game, a true icon and a good friend! *(hmmmm Sounds about right)*

Tim: Cars or Motorcycles?

Andy: Oh man. Both. I have lots of great bikes. Ducati 996s, some Harleys, some motocross and lots of others. But I also love cars. I've had Testarossas and Porsche 993 turbos etc.

Tim: Favorite stogie?

Andy: I love 'em a lot. Cohiba, Montecristos, Davidoff. You know the good ones.

Tim: What's next? What's the bucket list telling you?

Andy: I am travelling in December to go after free swimming striped marlins on a fly. No teasers, just marlin chasing bait balls. How fun would that be?

Thank you, Andy. Thanks to all club members for reading my fly-fishing pages over the years. I would have never had the opportunity to talk with such an icon like Andy Mill without the Suncoast Fly Fishers.



Tim Elms and a baby tarpon caught on the fly

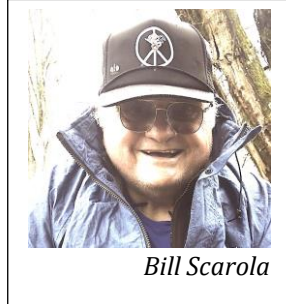
I will be paring back my articles in 2022 and hope other club members can step up to share their stories on these pages. If you just started or if you have some amazing memories of greatness and people, please reach out to Bill AuCoin and write a quick one pager every now and again.

Now that we're inspired, let's go get some poon RIGHT NOW! They are there.

Strip Strip Strip!!!

Tim

Bill Scarola: Jumping Jack Flash



Bill Scarola

This fly works in the saltwater and the freshwater so if you're fishing the September outing you've got the best all-around fly.

We won't be tying this month's fly in person and we'll not be on

Zoom either. Bruce is recovering from you-know-what. We'll get back together again to tie flies one of these days.



Bill Scarola's Jumping Jack Flash, fly of the month for the September outing in Safety Harbor. It's a winner in saltwater and in freshwater.

Materials

Hooks For saltwater: 34007, 1,2 sizes or VMC circle hook

2/0. For freshwater B-10 stingers size 4-6

Tail- Olive marabou

Body: Palmer chartreuse chenille or large Estaz

Eyes: Stick on eyes sized to match the hook

Glue: UV epoxy, E6000 or fletching glue

Thread: Flat waxed, olive.

Tying sequence

1: Wrap hook from eye to bend.

2: Add a clump of olive marabou just in front of the hook's bend to form a tail about one length or one and a half times the length of the shank. times shank

3: Tie in body material at the tail, then bring the thread forward to the hook eye palmering the material from the tail to the hook eye. Keep fibers bending back toward the hook bend. Then tie off the material and build up a small bead in front of the body material to hold the eyes.

4: Glue on the eyes with e6000 or similar glue on the bead of thread.

5: Epoxy over the eyes and the thread wrap. Cure with UV light.

###

Puns of the Day

A chicken crossing the road is a *...poultry in motion*

You are stuck with your debt if you can't *... budge it*

A lot of money is tainted.... *taint yours and taint mine*

When you've seen one shopping center...*you've seen a mall*

Smitty's Fly Box: Foxee Redd Clouser



It's a winner in the fresh or the salt

Bob Clouser and I were tying flies together at an Expo and he showed me this fly with fox fur. He said take a few of these and take them to the river on your next bass outing. Try them in the lakes along rocky bottoms where large numbers of crayfish find themselves a

frequent target of marauding largemouth. Try them the next time those wily brown trout turn up their noses at your best-presented nymph. Finally, cast this one in front of a tailing carp and hold on! ... *Don't forget* ... for saltwater, it's a sure winner for redfish!!! ... OK. Game on.



Smitty

Materials:

Hook: Mustad 33903 Kink-shank hook in #4 through #12 (Mustad CK74SSS #2 or #4 for salt)

Thread: Rusty orange, cream or brown 70 denier 6/0 (Flat waxed nylon for saltwater).

Belly: Cream or pink body fur from a red fox with the underfur removed.

Back: Dark mottled red fur from the back or shoulders of a red fox with the underfur left in. Tie the back shorter than the belly, not extending much behind the bend of the hook.

Flash: Sparse copper, mottled copper or rust-colored Flashabou. 2 strands for size 12, 4 strands for 10 and 8, 6 to 8 strands for size 6 and 4. Let the flash extend about ¼ inch beyond the belly fur (Go heavier on flash for Redfish).

Eyes: Painted lead dumbbells

Tying Sequence:

Step 1: The hook we'll use for this fly is a Mustad 33903 Kink Shank Popper Hook. I like this hook for Clouser-style flies because it makes placing the lead eyes easy and ensures proper proportions for every size fly from size 12 to size 4. The proportions start to wander from size 2 and up, so I use different hook styles for very large versions of this fly. Day in and day out the number 1 size to carry is a size 6 - that's the magic size for this fly! (#2 or #4 for salt).

Steps for Smitty's Foxee Redd Clouser continue on next page

P2/ Smitty's Fly Box: Foxee Redd Clouser

Step 2: Start by laying down a smooth thread base that covers both of the kinks in the kink-shank hook.

Step 3: The lead dumbbell eyes will fit right into that first kink just perfectly. And every time you tie the fly you'll have the same distance from the front of the lead eyes to the eye of the hook.

Step 4: The crayfish has a bilateral coloring with the dorsal surface dark and the ventral surface light in color. The bottom of a crayfish is often closer to cream in tone. To imitate this color and translucency, use the pinkish fur from the sides of a red fox pelt.

Step 5: Select a good clump of fox fur and clear out all the underfur, leaving only the soft, creamy guard hairs. Tie them in front of the lead eyes. Move the thread behind the eyes.

Step 6: Bind the belly down behind the eyes and put a whip finish into the thread to lock it. Move the thread to the front of the hook.

Step 7: Tie in two to eight strands of copper or rusty brown crystal flash so that it is just a bit longer than the belly.

Step 8: Select the fur for the back of the fly from the dark, well-marked fur from the shoulders or back of the red fox pelt. Clip a thick bunch and leave the underfur in.

Step 9: Clean and square the clump and tie it in front of the lead eyes.

Step 10: Form a neat thread head and whip finish.

Step 11: Cement the head with Sally Hansen's or UV Resin.



###

Capt. Pat Damico: Captain's Corner



Weed-free fly-fishing options.

Floating weeds and grass are things we must contend with when fishing with a fly rod. If we don't make a fly look natural, fish will refuse it. Having green stuff on the fly hook will always get a refusal. Flies that represent baitfish must be moved through the water to look exactly as they should. Select fly patterns that have the hook pointed up, with relatively stiff hair extending past the hook bend, thus giving you a weedless option. If weeds are on the surface, use a weighted fly and even a sink tip line that will get your offering deeper, thus avoiding the weeds. Clouser minnows and bend backs are good examples. If you tie your own flies or have a fly tier that keeps you supplied, use a strand of 20- or 30-pound hard monofilament tied in at the head to protect the hook point. A single-strand wire is also an effective alternative, especially for darker flies. Flies that encourage strikes with little movement are also a great choice; crab, shrimp, and sand flea imitations fit the bill here. Time your cast to wait until there is an opening in the grass. Pay attention to wind and tide. Accuracy really is important, too. You want your fly to hit a spot that is weed-free.

Practice casting to targets in your backyard to improve your ability to hit a small spot. When fishing canals or channels, the windward side will frequently have all the debris, leaving the other side open. Catch-and-release beach fishing is another great option. Target fish in the wash close to the sand, usually a weed-free zone.

Captain Pat

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

Bill AuCoin: Tip of the Month



I saw this tip on a forum some time ago. I secure fluoro and mono on the spool with hair bands. Insert the line into the eye of a heavy needle, push the needle through the band, then wrap the band around the line. After that you just pull-out and snip-off the length you need and the rest of the line stays put.

Bill

Got a tip? Email me a photo and few words of description. wmaucoin@verizon.net

Bill Scarola: Funnies and Fillers for the Month



Bill Scarola

Here's a funny sent to me by fellow SFFer David Janusik:

A PESSIMIST sees a dark tunnel.

AN OPTIMIST sees a light at the end of the tunnel.

A REALIST sees a freight train

THE TRAIN ENGINEER sees three idiots standing on the tracks!!!

AND if you jump off a bridge in Paris you are in SEINE!

Padump bum ching

Are you a fly fisherman?

Oldies but goodies from Al Campbell (RIP)

- If your buddy tells you your fly is open and you have to ask if there is another way to attach the wings...you might be a fly fisherman.
- When your wife was cooking a turkey and sent you to the store for some sage for the dressing, if you returned with a Sage fly rod...you might be a fly fisherman.

(H/T Red Cedar Fly Fishers, Okemos, Michigan)

"Angling is extremely time consuming. That's sort of the whole point."

(Thomas McGuane, with thanks to the Desert Fly Casters of Chandler, AZ)

"Just one more cast is always a lie."

(C. W. "Don" Coleman, deceased, was a member of the Suncoast Fly Fishers. He wrote the booklet given to all new members - "Wading the Saltwater Flats with a Fly Rod.")

Bill AuCoin : Flyfisher Flyover



Did somebody say, *Andy Mill*? Be sure to read Monte Burke's article in [Garden and Gun](#). And here's another Andy Mill article written a few years ago by Bill Sisson, also a terrific editor/writer. Sisson drills down on Andy's focus on tarpon. ([Angler's Journal](#))

Mayfly Project -- Hey, here's a salute to our club and to our member Scott Russell for the work he does to get fly fishers to mentor foster children. ([Anna Maria Sun](#))

Take more pictures. You know, the cameras on our smart phones are pretty amazing. So, just a suggestion: shoot a few photos every time you fish. Challenge yourself to make 'em great. They'll remind you of that time on the water, even if you don't catch fish. And, every now and then, you'll take a picture worthy of your computer desktop image. Here is a link with loads and loads of good images. ([Midcurrent](#))

And speaking of good fishing pix.... Right now, I can't think of any magazine with photos that are as pleasing and, yes, inspirational as the ones in this publication. You'll get a glimpse of some on the linked digital version but if you want the full dose of adrenalin, subscribe. ([Tail Fly Fishing](#))

Why, exactly, are we fly fishers? A whole bunch of people weigh in on the advantages of fly fishing but none that I read seem to nail it. I guess it's a personal thing. To each his own. Or her. Or whatever. ([Quora](#))

Have you read Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*? Me neither. This book reviewer applauds how this 17th century treatise remains as compelling today as when it was written. He says Walton understood the behavior of freshwater fish, and that his description of pike and perch are in living terms. And, your big reward? You sit on the bank and contemplate? I'm pretty sure Izaak Walton never sight-fished for migrating tarpon. ([The New Criterion](#))

On the other hand... If you want to read Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*, you can download it for free. I guess after 300 years-plus the copyright has expired. Let me know if you read it and what you think. ([Gutenberg.org](#))

Tampa and St. Pete are merging. Well, not the cities. The boat shows. The Tampa Boat show was supposed to be September 10-12 but it was cancelled and will be merged with the St. Petersburg Power & Sailboat Show January 20-23, 2022. It's the largest boating event on Florida's Gulf Coast, and getting bigger. It's downtown at the marina and the park across from the Salvador Dali Museum. ([Marina Dock Age](#))

We've all answered this question. Can you fly fish in saltwater? It's one of the articles in the September issue of *On The Fly South*. Of course, the answer is *Sure you can*. This is a good overview of saltwater fly fishing. I'll add one thing. You also should join the Suncoast Fly Fishers. ([On The Fly South](#))

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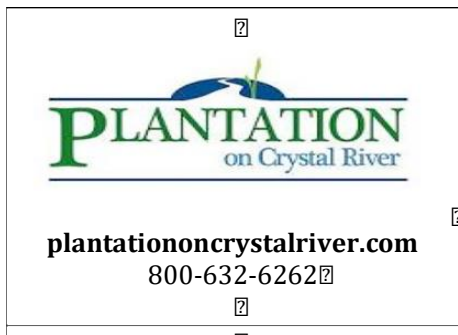
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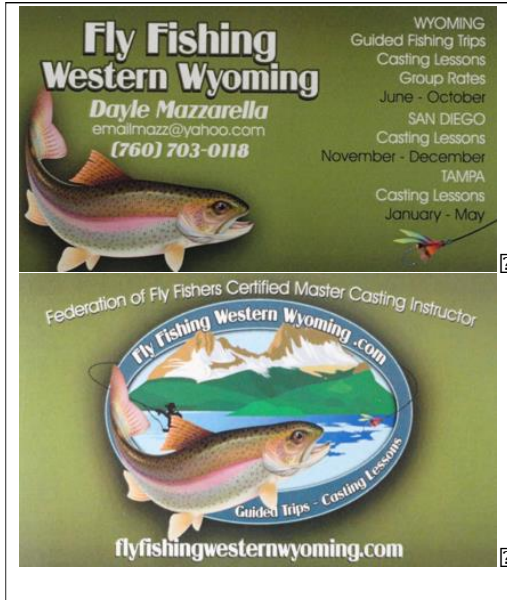
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