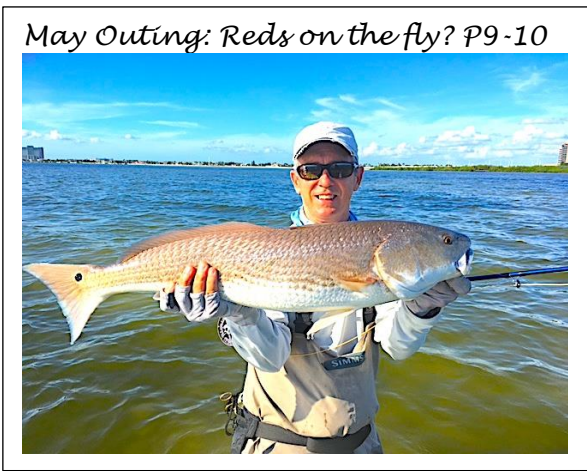
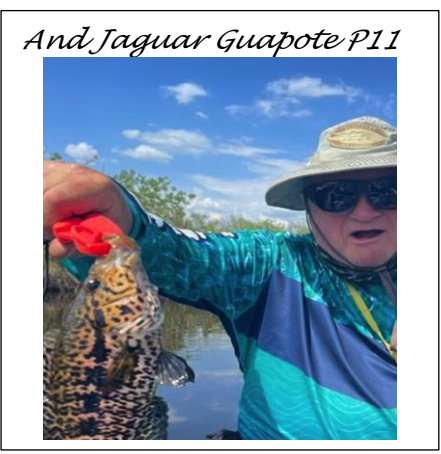


# On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg





## The President's Message: May 2022

Here's to good health. For the last two plus years Covid has dominated our lives. Infections are trending up due to the Omicron sub-variant, but overall rates are still relatively low, and deaths are almost at pre-Covid levels. It is time to remember that there is more to good health than avoiding Covid.

Many years ago, I studied Biology at FSU. In my introductory class, the professor said that, except for some minor nutrients, you can get everything you need to live by drinking beer, eating peanut butter and having two grapefruit a week. To that I would add fly fishing. Fly fishing is great for our physical health, our social health and our mental health.

What could be more beneficial to your health than getting outdoors and going fly fishing? It is good exercise, it helps with concentration, coordination, balance and physical stamina. It also stimulates creativity and helps support good mental health. Fly tying can really get our creative juices flowing and there is nothing better than catching a fish on a fly that you tied yourself. As for mental health, it is hard to think about whatever may be bothering you when you are on the water fishing. (See [8 Reasons to Consider Fly Fishing | California Trout \(caltrout.org\)](#), originally published in the Washington Post}. There are many programs like Project Healing Waters that employ fly fishing to promote mental health and many other programs that utilize fly fishing to raise awareness and money for good causes like the Tampa Bay Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America tournament that SFF supported earlier this month.

Fly fishing is a social activity. Belonging to a club like Suncoast Fly Fishers is a great example. You get to interact with fellow fly anglers, participate in community service, and learn about our sport and about the environment that we fish in. This month we will focus on another aspect of good health. Please welcome Maya Burke of Tampa Bay Estuary Program to speak at our May member meeting about the health of the bay. It will be a great evening. See you there!

Stay safe and keep fishing!

*Rick*

Rick Warfel  
SFF President

## Meetings, Outings, and More

### **Monday, May 16. Tie the Suncoast Fly Fishers fly of the month**

- Join fellow members to tie Bruce's Pink Lady Baitfish.
  - Meet up at 6 pm at Bruce Evensen's fly tying studio
  - Materials and tying instructions are on page 15.
- 

### **Thursday, May 19. Monthly Meeting. Health of the Bay Presentation. Walter Fuller Park, 7:00-8:30**

- Our speaker is Maya Burke, Assistant Director, [Tampa Bay Estuary Program](#). TBEP's mission is to inform and bring together public and private entities to restore and protect the Bay.
  - President Rick Warfel will start the meeting at 7. He'll update members on news and events, then introduce the speaker. Maya will update members on the health of the bay and future challenges to the bay's health.
  - Seagrass acreage is a major proxy for the health of the bay and until a couple of years ago it was expanding. Now, not so much. TBEP is drilling down to pinpoint the problem.
  - Come a little early and enjoy the "sides" – veggie platter, cookies, etc.
- 

### **Saturday, May 21, Outing. Cypress Point Park in Tampa**

- This is a good sandy/grassy wade-in flat and it also has a kayak launch area. Tides flow well here.
  - \$10 gift certificates will be awarded for the longest snook, redfish, and speckled trout.
  - Measure and take a picture of your longest redfish, longest snook, and longest seatrout.
  - Picnic at noon at one of the shelters. Robert and Anne Mitchell are grilling burgers and hot dogs.
  - Arrive at the picnic pavilion by 12:30 pm to enter your longest fish in the contest.
- 

### **Volunteers needed for summer youth casting clinics**

- The dates are June 15 and June 29 at Riverview Center, from 9 to 11 am
  - The July dates are July 7 and July 21 at Carrollwood Village Park from 9-noon both days.
  - David Redd has stepped up to manage this project
  - Volunteers are needed. Email David at [reddfish68@yahoo.com](mailto:reddfish68@yahoo.com) or call or text him at 727-458-8334.
- 

### **Sunday, May 22. Fly Fishing Film Tour, Tampa Theatre, 711 N. Franklin Street**

- It's a big deal, the 16<sup>th</sup> annual traveling roadshow of the best fly fishing films in the world.
  - Thanks to Tampa Bay Waterkeepers for arranging it.
  - For admission fee, times, etc. go to [this link](#) on the Tampa Theatre website.
- 

### **May 27-29, 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Folk Festival, Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park, White Springs**

- Volunteers Bruce Evensen and Claude Neidlinger will represent the Suncoast Fly Fishers.
  - Suncoast Fly Fishers club has been supporting this Festival and fly fishing for several years. Even Carl Hanson tied flies at this event.
  - Some 20,000 visitors are expected over the three-day affair.
  - For more info about the event go [here](#).
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## Meetings, Outings, and More

### 2022 outings at a glance

- May 21: Cypress Point Park (Longest snook, longest redfish, and longest speckled trout)
- June 17-18: Docklight outing (Longest snook)
- July 23: Fort DeSoto Park (Longest fish of any species). Smoked brisket BBQ competition.
- August 20: Urban Outing, Bay Vista Park, St. Petersburg (Longest snook, redfish, speckled trout)
- September 17 South Skyway rest area. (Longest fish of any kind))
- October 22: Carl Hanson Memorial, Hillsborough River. (Longest bass and the most bluegills)
- November 19: Weedon Island Preserve (Longest ladyfish)
- December 17: Don Coleman Invitational, Fort De Soto Park (Longest fish)

### Tampa Bay Area Scouts go fly fishing...with Clousers tied by Suncoast Fly Fishers

- The Greater Tampa Bay Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America held its first fly fishing only tournament May 13-14. It was a catch-and-release only saltwater tournament in the waters ranging from Anclote Key to the Southern tip of Anna Maria Island.
- Leading up to the event, SFF members doubled down on tying Clousers to provide to tournament participants. SFF logo fly boxes each containing three Clousers were donated to all registrants. A fly rod and reel outfit was awarded for the largest seatrout caught on a Clouser.
- The Greater Tampa Bay Area Council is chartered by the Boy Scouts of America. It encompasses nine counties and serves more than 15,000 youth in 189 Cub Scout packs, 192 BSA groups, 26 Venturing Crews, and five Sea Scout Ships, and 26 Pathfinder units. For all the details visit the Council website: [Greater Tampa Bay Area Council \(mobilecause.com\)](http://GreaterTampaBayAreaCouncil.com)

### Two brief fishing reports: O'Byrne and Constantinou

- Chris O'Byrne, our official reporter from Polk County, reports that bass fishing has improved with the "gentle heat" and the end of the spawning season. Chris reported that bass are holding in a variety of structure and are responding to weighted wooly buggers, trout nymphs, and deer hair poppers.
- Andy Constantinou caught his first bluefish on the fly in Cockroach Bay near Apollo Beach. This three pounder made an "incredible run taking me down to the backing," Andy said. "What a fish." He also caught several seatrout and a ladyfish.



Chris O'Byrne



Steve (Gibby) Gibson. RIP

### Sad news

- Steve Gibson, popular kayak and beach-fishing fly guide, died May 1. He was 72.
- Gibby, as he was often called, also was well known for creating the popular Myakka Minnow fly and for his DT Special Variation fly.
- He was our club's guest speaker in October of 2019 and shared so much about how to catch exotics in the Everglade canals. Here's the [link](#) to Tim Elm's article in our newsletter. Scroll down to page 12.

# 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 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](http://SuncoastFlyFishers.com)

[Monthly Calendar](#)

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

### Online Pay Portal: Pay dues, donate, purchase

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

### Membership

Suncoast Fly Fishers now has 111 members including 13 family members and 6 honorary members. Dues are \$50 (for individuals, \$40 for seniors, and \$60 for families. It includes benefits and annual membership in [Fly Fishers International](#) and the [Florida Council](#) of Fly Fishers International.

#### Welcome new members

Chris Kolodzei, St. Petersburg  
Richard DeMeza, Tarpon Springs  
John Connolly, Madeira Beach  
Lou Nash, Lakeland

### 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, James Davis

**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

Editor Bill AuCoin, Anne Mitchell, Bob Hood, Tim Elms, Marshall Craig, Kevin Kelly.

**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.**

## Bill AuCoin: April 21 Tie-a-Thon and free pizza

It was a good meeting. Productive. Skill sharpening.. Learning. Camaraderie. And importantly -- free pizza and cookies .

Big tips of the SFF hat brim go to Bill Scarola, James Davis, Bruce Evensen, Alan Sewell, David Redd, Claude Neidlinger and others for tying 200 Clouser minnows for the first council-wide scouts saltwater fly fishing tourney.



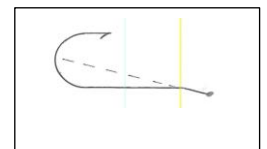
*Smitty's badger pelt*

Smitty brought his big pelt of badger hide and hair and tied his beautiful badger bonefish fly he calls *Lefty's Bonefish fly*.

There's a backstory. Here's Smitty: "Lefty saw me tying that fly at an FFF Southeastern conclave and he told me he really liked the fly and would I tie him some for a trip he was guiding for some of his friends in the Bahamas with one slight change; they had to have pink noses. So I said sure and tied him up a dozen or so and with a hearty thank you off he went! When he returned, he called me to thank me a second time and told me everybody in his group caught bones on either the first or second cast. I of course said WOW!!! Then he said 'By the way, what do you call that fly'" I said "Up until now it didn't have a name ... so I'm gonna call it *Lefty's Bonefish Fly*... He let out one of his deep signature laughs and said "That's just fine with me!" ... and that's how it got its name!!!"

Toni Fernstrom came over to say hello and jokingly asked Smitty if he could have Smitty's big slab of badger fur. Negatory. But it worked. Kinda. Smitty gave Toni two of his Lefty's Bonefish Flies and a Summer's Tide fly. Toni was a happy dude. So he gave Smitty one of his beautiful flies. It was Poul Jorgensen's Blue Rat fly Toni tied on a blue Daiichi 2059 Alec Jackson 1.5 spey fly hook.

Tony Piazza tied bendbacks and made a very useful point (pun intended). He said, "I tied the bendback, putting special attention on the proper way to bend the shank so to insure hooking the fish. The proper bend has the shank in a line going no more than half way between the barb and the top of the bend."



*Clouser station: Bill Scarola and James Davis*



*Smitty's Summer's Tide flies and Lefty Bonefish Fly*



*Toni Fernstrom tied Poul Jorgensen's Blue Rat fly.*



*Left, John Connolly and Cliff Nigh tied schminnows. Right, Wayne Schriver and Richard DeMeza attended school.*



*Truk Trukenbrod really enjoyed supper*

## Bob Burkard: April Outing—Blackthorn Memorial I-275 Rest Area

*Scary moment: a gust of wind launched the big bag of potato chips.*

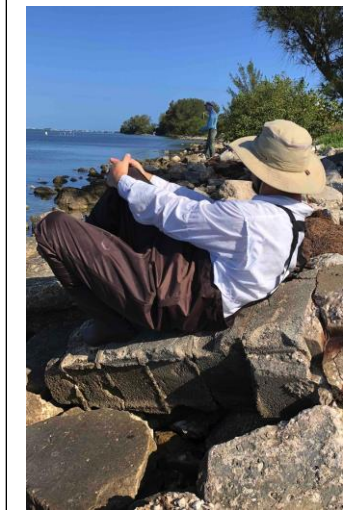


*Bob Burkard, Chairman of the Outings Committee*

Well, there's an old saying, "When wind is from the east, fishing is least." That certainly applied to April's outing at the North Skyway I-275 rest area. And, boy oh boy, that east wind was strong. Nobody caught a snook, a redfish, nor a spotted seatrout. Even Mark Hays and Tom Gadacz were skunked.

But some members put extra effort into it to catch something so we should applaud Robert Mitchell and Tony Piazza because each caught two lizard fish. Annie Mitchell caught one.

Truk Trukenbrod tried so hard to catch a fish he hurt his knee. (He's better now.)



*Robert Mitchell takes a break from catching lizardfish.*

For midday sustenance, Bill AuCoin brought sandwiches and cookies from Publix. Kevin Kelly stopped at Dunkin Donuts and brought donuts and coffee.

The rest area was on the protected side of I-275 so the picnic was smooth except when a gust of wind launched the big bag of Lays potato chips. Members were able to catch it and save most of the valuable material. Oh well. Life has its ups and downs, calms and chaos.



*There was a nice and calm view of lower Tampa Bay from the wind-sheltered west side of the Sunshine Skyway. FYI, these live bait fishers didn't catch anything either.*

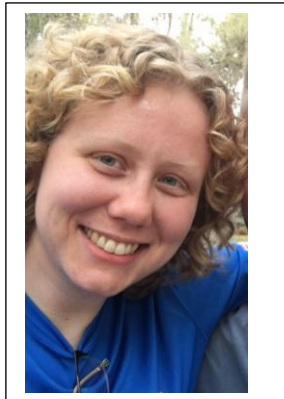
Here's hoping that the winds for the May 21 outing at Cypress Point Park are from the correct direction.

Remember, when the wind is from the east, fishing is least. When the wind is from the west, fishing is best.

*Bob*

## Annie Mitchell: Where Did All the Fish Go?

*April's outing at the Blackthorn Memorial rest area was perfect. Except....*



The April outing was set to be perfect:

A rising tide. ✓

Perfect weather. ✓

Tons of baitfish. ✓

Warm water. ✓

What more could a fisherman ask for? Well, as it turns out, fish.

Robert and I waded to an oyster bar first thing that morning. The tide was moving past the bar at a good clip, and we kept seeing and hearing baitfish bite the dust. But all we caught was seaweed. When we got to the oyster bar, we waded in in front of it as there was hardly any water between the bar and the shore.

Finally, Robert hooked a fish. When he pulled it in, he yelled over to me, "What's this thing?" Turns out this was the first time he had ever caught a lizard fish. His next question was, "Is it edible?" Well, anything is edible if you're hungry enough, but since we had eaten in the last two days the lizard fish was released.

Robert caught a smaller lizard fish before my dad joined us. He hadn't found any fish by wading the shoreline, and he still didn't find any by fishing near us.



*What's this thing?, asked Robert. Also, he wanted to know, "Is it edible?"*



Dad decided it was time for us to take a walk. We

all walked the entire seawall next to the on/off road. That was really the highlight of the day.

The water was crystal clear. We could see lots of healthy soft coral, sheepshead, pinfish, needlefish, bait, and more. Dad teased a tripletail and I got a sheepshead on the flats to chase my fly.

I finally managed to catch a lizardfish by casting parallel to the rocks. It was even smaller than both of Robert's lizardfish but at least I caught something.

*Annie*

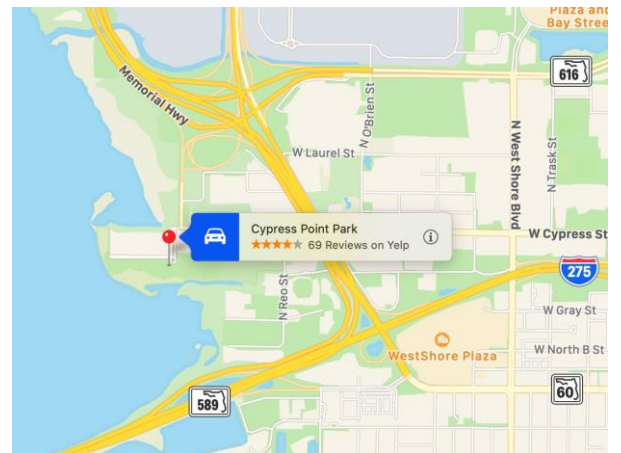
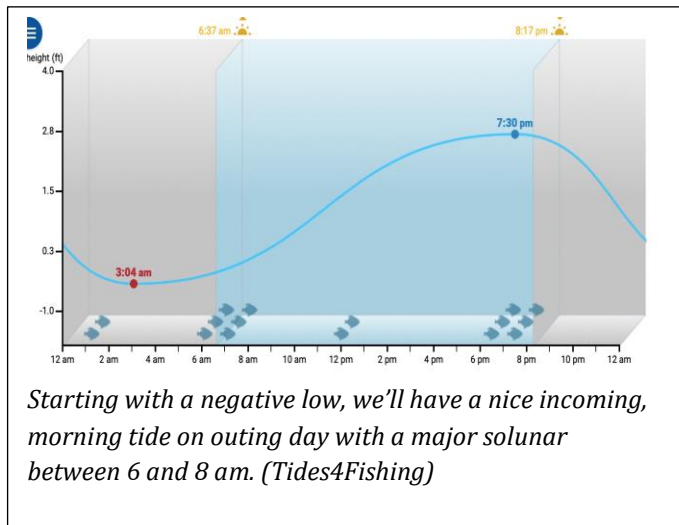


## Bob Burkard: May Outing at Cypress Point Park. \$10 gift certificates for the longest redfish, snook, and spotted seatrout

***Fly fish in the morning. Meet at noon for a picnic lunch.***

Our May outing is Saturday May 21 at Cypress Point Park in Tampa. This park fronts a wide sandy flat that's great for wade fishing and kayak fishing. (It even has a kayak launch area.) Depending on the sun position, it can be terrific for sight fishing.

On the following page we've pasted in excerpts from Walt Durkin about how and when he likes to fish this flat. Walt is president of the Tampa Bay Fly fishing Club.



### ***Directions to Cypress Point Park via I-275***

*Take the Howard Frankland Bridge (I-275) toward Tampa. Take exit 39 toward the airport. Stay in the right lane. Exit onto W. Spruce Street. Go 1/2 mile on Spruce and turn right on N. O'Brien St. Go 1/2 mile. Turn right (West) onto W. Cypress Street Go 1/2 mile to destination. It's on your left*

You can fish as early or as late as you want but the longest fish entered in the tournament must be caught before noon. Measure them and take pictures. Arrive at the picnic by 12:30 to officially announce your catch. I'll not be there so report your catch to Robert Mitchell. Email your pictures to me ([robertburkard9@gmail.com](mailto:robertburkard9@gmail.com)).

### *Leaders on the 2022 Outing Tournament Trail*

Species	Winner	Length (inches)	Outing (Month)
Longest bream	Anne Mitchell	9	Walsingham Park (March)
Longest black bass	Mark Hays	12	Walsingham Park (March)
Longest snook			
Longest redfish			
Longest ladyfish	Rick Warfel	20-1/4	Weedon Island Preserve (January)
Longest seatrout			
Longest fish	Karen Warfel		Fort DeSoto Park (February)

Bob

## Walt Durkin: How to fly-fish Cypress Point Park



Walt Durkin, President,  
Tampa Bay Fly Fishing  
Club

*Editor's note: Our May outing is at Cypress Point Park. Here are excerpts from an article by Walt Durkin of the TBFFC on how and when he likes to fish the flat at Cypress Point Park in Tampa. Walt wrote this for the May 2021 issue of On The Fly.*

Two flats fish well at Cypress, one to the south and one to the north. The flat to the north holds the most fish by far, but can be a little crowded with fisherman. The flat to the south can also be quite good and you may have it to yourself.

The northern end starts at the end of the beach area and runs about one quarter mile to a canal coming out of the mangroves. You can fish beyond that canal if you have a kayak and I have found reds there. The main feature to the north is the sandbar, which runs parallel to shore about one hundred yards out and will be dry on a negative low tide. Inside the bar to the east, grass is the main feature and

covers the flat even in winter. Outside the bar is mostly sand with some patches of grass that get sparse in the winter.

Seek the negative lows around the full and new moons, especially aided by a north or northeast wind. You want to fish around the lowest possible tides, which concentrate the fish outside the bar to the west.

On a good negative low (minus one foot or more) all the fish will have been pushed off the grass and to the outside of the bar. Here you will find them milling about in schools of 20 or more and also smaller bunches. They are easy to see on a sunny day over the sand, but not so easy to catch.

Fish small crab or shrimp patterns on long (12-13 feet) leaders down to 10 lb. tippet. I also use a clear-head floating line for stealth. The fish can see well in the clear water and will spook if they see your line or see you cast. Try to carefully present the fly about 10 feet in front of one or more fish and get the fly on the bottom before they see it. If they see the fly land they will spook. When the fish approach the fly give it a very small bump and hope for the best. If you get a follow, I like to keep the fly moving a little like it is trying to get away.

Your best chance to hook one of these reds is when a big school comes along and you can get your fly on the bottom among them. Usually, one or another will pick up the fly perhaps from a sense of competition.

*Walt*



*Left. That's Ted Hagaman of the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club with two of the 16 reds he caught one day in February. He fished the same fly all day, a little green shrimp fly with bead chain eyes.*

## Eglades April Outing: Reports from the Clewiston Crew



Clewiston Crew at dinner. Left to right – Jack Collins, David Redd, Bruce Evensen, Truk Trukenbrod, Toni Piazza, and Bill Scarola.

Our club's annual Everglades Outing was in late April. As usual there were two outing groups.

One was Mark Hays with his daughter Annie Hays Mitchell and her hubby Robert. They stayed near Fort Lauderdale and fly-fished (mostly) Alligator Alley canals and spillways from Mark's flats boat.

Six members stayed in Clewiston at the south rim of Lake Okeechobee. Here are reports from Jack Collins and Bill Scarola.

### *Jack Collins*

We fished "Billy's Bass Hole." It's about an hour south of Clewiston. This canal runs parallel to Route 27 for several miles south. There are many side channels off of this main canal that are loaded with fish and gators. I saw one of the biggest gators this week. He shined a great smile with his pearly whites at Bill and I as he silently slipped into the deep.

I used white spiders almost exclusively. I was getting hits on almost every cast. The water was very clear so I could see most hits. It's like dry fly fishing for rainbow trout. Very exciting! I think Bill can add to the fly list. He used quite a variety. I just didn't want to take time to stop and try other flies. I stuck with what worked.

*Jack*



Jack Collins and his first peacock bass.

### *Bill Scarola*

The fish are back in town!!! We all caught a bunch today including oscars, peacock bass, bowfins, bream, sunnies, Mayan cichlids and the rare Jaguar Cichlid. Jack Collins caught his first peacock bass. It really liked his white spider. Dave caught 50 fish today. Jack caught 30. I caught 19. We all got worn out from reeling in so many fish.

*Bill*



Bill's jaguar cichlid

## Annie Mitchell: Everglades Outing 2022

*Exotic fishes. Assertive Alligator. Wind, rain, and a physics experiment.*

Ever since Robert and I started dating, my dad and I have been driving him crazy talking about how great the Everglades are. We regaled him with tales of catching a hundred fish a day per person, the exotic Amazonian fish, the alligator that growled at us and charged our boat once. Naturally, Robert thought these were just fish tales and it couldn't possibly be THAT GREAT down there. We proved him wrong.

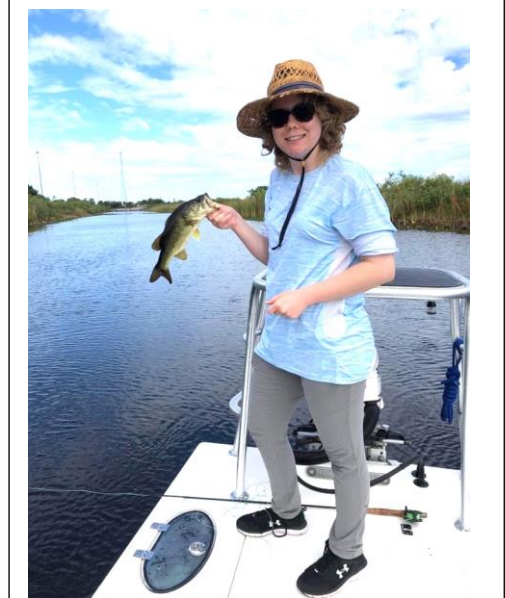
Dad, Robert, and I brought our flats boat with us. For those who haven't been down there yet, the man-made freshwater canals off Alligator Alley are deep and long enough for bass boats and other small motor boats to run full speed. Our first stop is always one canal that only has access on the eastbound side of the highway. I started with a trusty white beetle, Dad had a White Snake Fly (what else would he use), and Robert had a Green and White Clouser.

Dad and I each caught fish on about our second casts, and from there we were each catching about 1 fish per 3 casts for the rest of the day. Among the other fish we caught were: Oscars, Alligator Gar, Jaguar Guapote, Bluegill, Stumpknocker, Largemouth Bass, Warmouth Bass, Peacock Bass, Tilapia, and Speckled Perch.

On Robert's first cast he caught a large Mayan Cichlid. These fish are native to eastern Mexico and Nicaragua.

A one-footer is a monster, but they are extremely tough fish that fight like a small Jack. They dart out of the lime rock and practically turn eating into a contact sport. These fish generally want the fly moving aggressively, but they will swim to the surface and attack a stationary Smitty Spider.

The Butterfly Peacock Bass is the truly prized species in the Everglades. Even though they are not native, there are size and bag limits set by the FWC. That's because the Peacocks, which are native to the Guianas and Brazil, eat the other non-native fish babies. The best fly for these fish turned out to be the Orange Snake Fly. Dad had tied these years ago to catch Redfish before he even knew what Peacock Bass were. He never caught a Redfish with this fly, but he hammered the Peacocks with it. These fish are even more aggressive than the Cichlids, and they want flies that are even shinier and moving faster. The lone exception was the one who decided to eat my beetle.



*Annie Mitchell with an Everglades canal bass.*



*Robert Mitchell with a peacock bass*

*(Continued on next page)*

## P2/Annie Mitchell: Everglades Outing 2022

Jaguar Guapote are native to Nicaragua. They are black and white spotted fish with a purple sheen on their sides. They're not as tough as the other exotics, but they still put up a good fight. They have no preference on how fast the fly is moving, and they ate every fly we used this weekend.

Oscars are native to South America and were likely introduced to the Everglades because someone put them in his/ her aquarium and then decided to release the fish when it attacked everything else in the tank. These guys normally want a sinking fly that barely moves, but they will come up to the surface and eat a moving fly. They swim to the bottom when hooked so they're harder to bring in than a Mayan Cichlid. They're also extremely slippery and slimy. They're not as hard to grab as a rainbow trout, but keep a rag in the boat for these guys.



*Jaguar Guapote  
(Wikipedia)*



*Oscar (Wikipedia)*



*Mark Hays and a peacock bass.*

There were very few native fish this year. It is clear that the tougher, faster exotics have taken over the canals. On the second or third days we caught more natives, but for every native fish we caught, we brought in 10-20 exotics. The problem is that the Everglades only gets cold weather about once a decade, and it's been a long time since it got cold enough to disrupt the tropical fish.

### **How to save your flies**

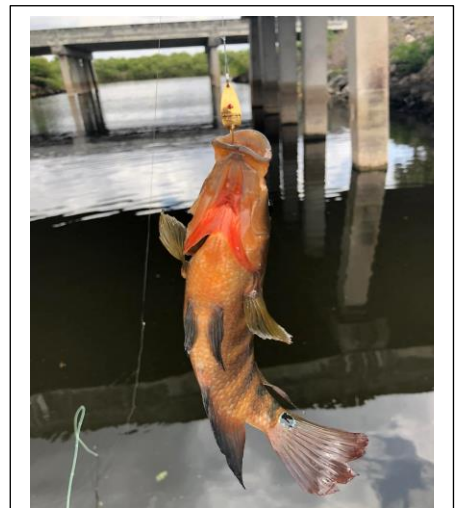
The absolute best fly of the trip wasn't a fly at all, but a gold spoon. Alan Sewell gave one each to Robert and I before we left with strict instructions not to let Dad have one. The spoons come from Hoffman Baits. I can't recommend them enough! I love fishing anything gold, especially a spoon or jig

during the summer. It just seems to grab the fish's attention better than silver.

### **Gold spoon versus spiders and beetles**

The best part about these gold spoons is that fish teeth, pliers, and hemostats don't damage them. My gold spoon lasted for the afternoon of the first day to lunch on the second day. By contrast, I went through about 10 spiders and beetles during the rest of the trip. Every fish in the Everglades except the gar ate them, and they weren't too hard to cast.

*(Continued on next page)*



*Cichlid on a gold spoon fly.*

## P3/Annie Mitchell: Everglades Outing 2022



*Close encounters of the gator kind.*

We had one close encounter with a gator. In all our years of fishing fresh water, we had one get aggressive, but he stayed far away when he realized how big our boat was. This gator knew the drill. He swam right up to the boat and was looking for us to throw him a fish. Dad hit him on the head with the tip of his fly rod and the gator hissed. He followed us after we moved the boat with the trolling motor. I made the executive decision to turn the motor on and Dad got us out of that canal.

### **The Perfect Storm? Yeah, in a good way.**

During the afternoon of our first day, storms were building across the sea of grass. At one point, the wind was so strong that we were sailing down the middle of the canal. Even though our lines kept getting tangled, we got a break from the merciless sun for an hour or so.

It ended up raining from the time we got to our hotel in Sunrise until 8 am the next morning. We didn't get to start fishing until 9 am, but the rain ended up working in our favor. We spent all of day two at the "Visitor Center" canal. There is a huge rest area on Alligator Alley with two ramps in very rough shape. Dad also calls it "Big Bass Canal" because there are usually more largemouth bass there. We did in fact catch some big bass along with hundreds of other fish. We really believe the rain perked up the fish as we generally don't do as well at this canal, but it was just as productive as the previous one.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention how great the food was and always is when we go to Ft. Lauderdale. Our favorite restaurant is Lester's Diner. It's owned by a Greek family, and they serve Greek/ American/ New York/ Jewish food, plus they have large cases of desserts. Our favorites from this trip were the Greek style London Broil, half a Greek chicken, and the carrot cake.

We spent our last few hours fishing on day three at a remote canal north of Alligator Alley. The fish weren't as active at this canal, but we did catch a few more before we took the scenic route home through the middle of the state. This canal is below the giant powerlines that feed Ft. Lauderdale. At one point I put my hand on Robert's shoulder to step down and I got a small static shock. I tried again and we got a little more of a shock. I waited a few seconds thinking surely this has gone away. When I touched his shoulder again it felt like a dental drill was going into my palm. My palm swelled pink and Robert jumped back in pain. That's when Dad put two and two together that we were under gigantic powerlines and we'd just done a physics experiment.

This truly was a trip to remember, and I can't wait to try fishing there in the winter when it's a little cooler.

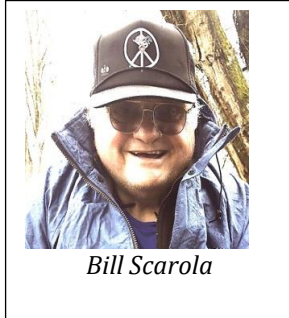
*Annie*

*(Be sure to check out all of Annie's Everglades pix on the [SFF Facebook site](#))*



*It's a two-fer. Mark in the poncho and Robert. Yeah, they had rain and wind but the fish weren't deterred and neither were Mark, Robert, and Annie.*

## Bill Scarola: Bruce's Pink Lady Baitfish Fly



Bill Scarola

*Join fellow members to tie the fly of the month at Bruce Evensen's fly tying studio at 6 pm Monday May 16. Bruce's fly-tying studio is at 531 80th Avenue N in St. Pete.*

This month's outing on May 21 is at Cypress Point Park. This Pink Lady Baitfish fly is a good

fly to hook up with snook, redfish, and seatrout.



### **Materials:**

HOOK: #2 3407 or similar. Circle hooks also work.

BODY: Tan Rope stuff or EP Fiber in tan, or Doll hair or Steve Farrar Blend.

FLASH: Ice dub shimmer fringe pink bronze back.

(NOTE: Bruce likes to cut off the darker strands, using only pink/orange colors).

EYES: 5mm stick-ons. Your choice of colors.

THREAD: Flat waxed pink or white, then color it with a marker in orange, pink or red.

GLUE: UV Epoxy and eye glue, Fletching, E6000 etc.

HOW TO DO IT: Note: all materials are tied straight back.

### **Tying Sequence**

1- Wrap hook shank from eye to bend.

2- Add a bit of tan fibers just in front of the bend

3- Add a 1/8" wide piece of pink shimmer fringe on top of the tan fiber added above. Be sure to cut off the darker fibers.

Note= if you're using SF fibers, skip adding the shimmer fringe. If you choose.

4- Add one or two clumps of tan fibers, tying in just ahead of the previously tied materials, to build up the body.

5- Add 1 or 2 pieces 1/8" of shimmer fringe just ahead & on top of the last tied in fibers.

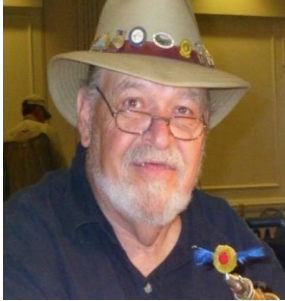
6- Attach a very sparse bit of tan fibers ahead and over top of the last added shimmer fringe. Tie off all fibers.

7- Attach your eyes, adding a drop of glue first to each side, then be sure to keep the eyes above the shank and over or just ahead of the hook point, this might depend on the type of hook and length of shank.

8- Add UV Epoxy to cover the eyes and thread wraps and cure.

*Bill*

## Smitty's Fly Box: SF Seatrout Baitfish



I learned to tie this at the hands of fellow tier Steve Farrar ... I like to tie this fly in mullet browns and tans for this area, the blues are more of a north Atlantic color).

Fish this fly like any baitfish pattern i.e. varied short and long stripping action. Set the hook with a strong strip strike or let the fish set the hook for you. Your choice!



*Smitty*

### Materials:

Hook: Partridge CS 54 #2 shrimp hook or Mustad 34011 #2

Thread: Danville Flat-waxed Nylon white or Clear Mono (medium)

Weight: 3 strands of .020 lead wire \*

Belly: Tiers favorite Pearl dubbing (Gliss 'n Dub, Senyo, etc.) \*

Body: Steve Farrar Blend Off White

Flash: Silver Gliss 'n Glow or Flashabou

Wing: Steve Farrar Blend Mackerel (or Camo, Mullet Brown, Olive or Tiers choice)

Head: Pro Softhead size small or x-small or Fly Men's Fish Mask size #4 or #6

Eyes: 3D eyes to fit Softhead or fish mask

Cement: CA Cement and Solarez UV Resin

**\*NOTE:** These are optional if you want to weight fly to fish deeper. If you want to fish skinnier water skip steps 1 & 2 in tying sequence

### Tying Sequence:

Step 1. Attach thread behind hook eye and wrap back on shank approx. halfway. Tie down lead wire.

Step 2. Coat thread with dubbing and cover the lead wire.

Step 3. Take a hank of belly material (about 1/8" thick when stretched) measure to twice hook length and tie in with several wraps an eyes-width behind hook eye. Fold over towards hook bend and tie down. Trim excess.

Step 4. At tie-in point, tie in three strands of flash to fly length and then fold over and tie down as in step 3. Trim excess.

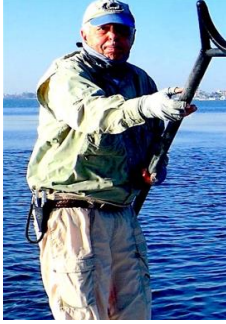
Step 5. Take a hank of wing material (slightly less than body material) and tie in the same as step 3 but **DO NOT** fold back and tie down. Let excess hang out over the hook eye for the time being. Whip finish and cut thread.

Step 6. Eyes may be attached to the softhead or fish mask at this time or you can put them on when the fly is completed. Either way, attach with a small drop of CA cement in the eye recess on the head.

Step 7. Fold back excess wing material and coat with UV Resin and slide head onto hook. Re-attach thread and tie in thread dam to hold head in place Coat eyes and cure head and eyes with UV lamp.

Step 8: Taper wing and belly to baitfish shape in length desired ... and GO FISH !





## Capt. Pat Damico: Captain's Corner

### How to release fish safely and quickly

A recent warming trend had been a boost to shallow-water fly fishing. Since most inshore species are in schools, many fish can be caught in a short period of time. Even if a few fish are going to be kept, having the ability to safely and quickly release a fish to catch another requires careful technique.

I often see serious anglers who want to preserve their sport for the future do the wrong things. Handling the fish with a dry towel, holding large fish vertically, and keeping them out of the water too long will prevent their survival.

Most flies have a single hook that can be crimped or debarbed before you start to fish. That means it will penetrate the fish's mouth easier and simplify your removal. Do barbless hooks make it easier to lose fish? If constant tension is applied, no.

Get the fish in quickly, especially in warmer water. When close to the boat, grab the leader close to the fish, and with your other hand engage the hook bend with a simple wire hook disgorger sold in all tackle shops, similar to the ones used to remove live baitfish from a Sabiki rig. Lift vertically with the disgorger while holding the leader below the fish's mouth. The hook point will disengage allowing it to slip back into the water.

Do all this without handling the fish. Check the fly and leader for damage and continue fishing. Fly fisherman and casting instructor Pat Damico charts in lower Tampa Bay and can be reached a

### *Captain Pat*

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

## Gear for Sale or Swap

### **Robert Fischer is selling his trolling motor**

Motor Guide W75 Remote Control Trolling Motor; 24 volt, 48" shaft; very good condition. \$350. Call Robert at 813-495-5685.

*(Email your classified ads to me at [wmaucoin@verizon.net](mailto:wmaucoin@verizon.net))*

## Bill Scarola: Puns of the Day

- Holy MACKEREL, this is one great fly, no Trout about it!
- It's in TUNA with the times! Without it fishing would be CRAPPIE.
- Knock, Knock... Who's there.... TUNA! TUNA WHO? TUNA-round and go fishing!!!!

## Bill AuCoin: Flyfisher Flyover



**Now the Tampa Bay region will have its own saltwater fish rules.** – There'll be another commission vote on this but it's looking like Florida's FWC is starting to take Tampa Bay's redfish and snook population declines more seriously. The big news is that now the Tampa Bay region has been separated from regions north and south so we'll have our own regulations. Good. I think we need catch-and-release only until populations recover from overfishing, red tide, Piney Point, declining seagrass, and who knows what else. ([MYFWC](#))

**Ya think?** The headline is, "A new study shows the Piney Point spill likely made red tide worse." I'm glad they are studying and documenting this but Tampa Bay fishermen knew this long ago. Tampa Bay fish populations will come back but we need strict regulations and enforcement. Have you noticed that so far this year nobody has entered a snook, redfish, or seatrout in our monthly outings. I'm not seeing anything but baitfish on the docklights. No snook or reds. Not even ladyfish.

([WUSE](#))

**Not good.** A man has died of septic shock after deadly bacteria entered his body through a small cut while he waded upper Tampa Bay near Oldsmar in early May. He waded in Wednesday, was rushed to the hospital on Friday, and died on Sunday. This is lesson for fly fishers, you know. ([Tampa Bay Times](#))

**Wet wader's popular website.** Before the May 21 outing check out the enterococcus bacteria score at Cypress Point Park. On May 3 it was good but a week before that it was "moderate." The point is, if you have a cut on your hand or anywhere on that gets wet, take precautions or skip the fishing.

([Florida Healthy Beaches](#))

**Permit on the fly is a much better drug.** Andy Mill described this guy as "probably the best saltwater fly angler in the world right now." Now this fly fisher looks for permit, not drugs, and runs his fly shop in Key West. This article has Monte Burke's byline so you know it's good. ([Garden and Gun](#))

**The artist loves watching gamefish and the effects of underwater light. And then...** He paints what he saw and what he felt and gives it what the writer calls a "three-dimensional illusion of form, color, and light." Yeah, they're beautiful. Don't you like the school of permits? ([Angler's Journal](#))

**Watch out below.** The Pasco County sheriff's office released aerial video of dozens of sharks swimming close to shore at Anclote Key near Tarpon Springs. Be careful out there. Take a look.

([Broible](#))



Sharks on our beaches.

**These fly rods get a personal touch.** Up in Maine Jeff Davis started a business making fly rods using locally sourced materials. They interviewed him on *Mornings with Maria*. H/T Ryan Sollars. ([Rumble](#))

**I'm tempted to spray my flies with Gulp.** Just There's a reason some of us don't catch fish. We have high "L-Serene" levels. I haven't been tested for it but, based on my lack of success, I'm pretty sure I've got super-high levels of it. Click on the link and scroll to page 7. ([Red Cedar Fly Fishers](#))

*Bill*

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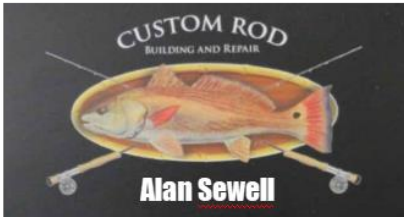


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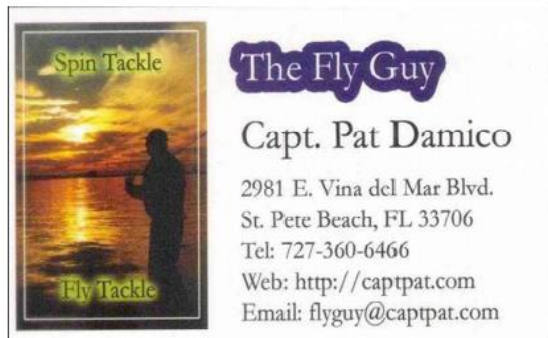
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