

On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg

Successful Hog Roast P7



Rick Redd, Our Club's Founder P10



Prefishing Eglades Outing P 12



Pat Damico's Skinny Water Snook P11



Fishing on Tim Elms Private Island P13



Tie Myakka Minnow for the Eglades P16





President's Message: April 2023

In April of 2008, the President of Suncoast Fly Fishers was Ken Hofmeister. For many of us, Ken was the first person to greet us when we joined the club and the first to introduce us to everyone else in the club. He made us feel comfortable and welcome in a room full of strangers.

Ken was a visionary. He brought many of the lessons learned in a career in marketing to his leadership of the club. Among the principles that Ken instilled in the club were constant improvement and meeting members' needs.

Ken introduced what we now know as the SFF Vision and Values award. Paul Sequira was the very first recipient. In Ken's words, "Paul Sequira was awarded the president's "Living the SFF Values" trophy in recognition of his contribution to club communications (outstanding newsletter) and meeting member needs through information and education (fly tying column). Despite serious medical issues, Paul taught us the meaning of "responsibility" by relentless attention to detail and useful feedback (improving processes)." Paul's remarks indicate how much this award meant to him at the time. "It is truly an honor to be recognized for that award especially when we have so many other members working hard to make our club the best in Florida."

Sadly, Paul and Ken are no longer with us, but their legacy lives on. This year the Vision and Values award was presented at the March Hog Roast to Quin Berry and David Redd. David and Quin each began serving on the SFF Board of Directors in 2018. Quin went on to become Vice President of the club and David has served as Secretary for the last four years. In addition to their roles on the board, they each wear more than one hat. Quin puts together our raffle at each member meeting. This is an important job as the proceeds are used to help pay the rent on our meeting space. He also does the bucket raffle at the Hog Roast and has helped with the raffles at FFI events. Quin also organizes our Big Gun Shootout practice session.

David has taken responsibility for coordinating all the summer youth casting programs. Each year SFF does multiple sessions teaching kids an introduction to fly fishing and showing them the basics of fly casting. David has also taken the lead for SFF's participation at boat shows and events like Marine Quest. You can also thank him for carving the brisket at our *BBQ by the Bay* event each of the last few years.

Thanks to both Quin and David for a job well done and for living up to the principles that Ken established so many years ago.

Thanks. Stay safe and keep fishing!

Rick

Rick Warfel

Meetings, Outings, and More

President Rick Warfel: Hog Roast was a huge success

- Thanks to everybody who attended and who donated flies and gear. It was a big success. How big? The net profit for the Suncoast Fly Fishers was \$4,100 and the Tampa Club, our co-hosts, also did very well
 - There were 126 in attendance. That's the most ever!
 - SFF Member Only Raffle - Custom Made Alan Sewell 5Wt + line and Lamson Reel went to Bill Skukowski,. Bill is an SFF member from Winter Haven **Thank you for your rod, Alan**
 - Our Featured Speaker – Chico Fernandez – **Still the Best**
 - Silent Auction, Raffles, Cash Donations and Prizes – **SFF realized a net profit of \$4,100 and the Tampa Club also did very well.**
 - Trophies for the longest fish entered into our annual tournament went to Anne Mitchell, Mark Hays, Tim Elms, Robert Mitchell, and President Rick Warfel (2)
 - SFF Vision and Values Awards were presented to David Redd and Quin Berry – **Congratulations Quin and David!**
 - Thanks to everyone from both clubs that pitched in to make this event a **Huge Success!**
-

Thursday, April 20-Meeting

Walter Fuller Park Recreation Center, 7891 26th Avenue N., St. Petersburg

- Speakers will talk about what you need to know for our two April outings. Members will be invited to share their advice, too.
 - Bob Burkard, our outings chairman, will talk about the April 22 outing at Trout Creek Conservation Park on the Hillsborough River.
 - Bill Scarola, Bruce Evensen, and Alan Sewell will talk about their April 26-30 plans for members to catch exotics and native fishes in the Everglades canals. If you want to go and if you are not already signed up, then make sure you talk to Bruce, Bill or Alan.
 - The Everglades canals outing includes a club picnic on bas, April 29, at the Mile Marker 34 Rest Area on (I-75) Alligator Alley.
-

Saturday, April 22-Outing

Trout Creek Conservation Park, Hillsborough River

- Fly fish in the morning then meet up by noon for a picnic lunch at a park picnic table. You'll see the Suncoast Fly Fishers sign. A \$10 gift certificate goes to the member catching the longest bass. Measure it and take a picture of it before you release it.
 - The park is just a little north of Temple Terrace. You'll Take I-4, then go north on I-75 and exit on Morris Bridge Road.
 - Fish in the morning. Meet up for lunch at the park picnic area by noon.
-

Everglades Outing, April 26-30

- Alan Sewell and others are staying in Sunrise, Florida and fishing nearby canals. Sunrise is just west of Fort Lauderdale. Recommended place to stay: [LaQuinta Inn at Sunrise](#). Phone 954-838-7473.
 - Bruce Evensen , Bill Scarola, and others are fly fishing canals north of Everglades location near Clewiston. This group is staying at the Mary Ann and Roland Martin Marina & Resort. Phone 800-473-6766.
 - Read more about all the outings on page ____.
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Meetings, Outings, and More

Upcoming events

Red tide blooms have required us to cancel our March Don Coleman Invitational which already had been rescheduled from December to March due to another outbreak of red tide. So, in response to requests from our SFF Members, our SFF Outings Committee has agreed on a new process.

So, now, Instead of cancelling an outing due to Red Tide, we will either move the outing to a fresh water location or we will find a salt water location that is unaffected by this evil algae. We will do our best to inform our members by sending email blasts and keeping the website updated.

- April Meeting. Bruce Evensen, Bill Scarola, and Alan Sewell will talk about fly fishing for exotics in the everglade canals. Bob Burkard and others will share their insights about fishing the Hillsborough River.
- April 22 outing: Trout Creek Conservation Park, Hillsborough River
- April 26-30 outing: Everglade exotics out of Clewiston and Sunrise, Florida
- May Meeting.-Capt. Brad Lowman will talk about fly fishing upper Tampa Bay
- May Outing: Upper Tampa Bay. Lunch at the Crab Shack on Gandy Boulevard
- June 15 meeting: speaker is James Davis. Subject: Beaches and docklight fishing.
- June 16-17 Outing; Beaches and Docklights
- July:20 meeting: speaker is Justin Tramble, director of Tampa Bay Waterkeepers.
- July 22 Outing: Picnic Island Park, Tampa Bay
- August 17 meeting: Video gallery, fishing beaches with a fly rod
- August 19 outing: Fort De Soto Park with a summer brisket BBQ picnic
- September 21 meeting: Fly tying
- September 23 outing: Emerson Point Preserve, Palmetto
- October 19 meeting; Peter Clark, founder and president, Tampa Bay Watch
- October 21 Outing: Carl Hanson with Tampa Bay Fly Fishers. Rotary Riverfront Park, Temple Terrace
- November 16 meeting: Open house speaker
- November 18 outing: Fort De Soto Park
- December: no meeting
- December Outing: Don Coleman Invitational, Fort DeSoto Park

Let's grow the club

- Your club is one of the larger fly fishing clubs in the country but new members are always welcome. Here are some ideas discussed by the board of directors to grow our membership.
- Invite your friends to come with you to meetings and outings. They'll get to experience the fun and friendships.
- From time to time we'll have fly tying demonstrations and other programs that will appeal to fly fishing newbies.
- Spread the word on social media like Facebook.

Meetings, Outings, and More

This fly-fishing tournament is for a good cause: April 29

- The Greater Tampa Bay Area Scout Council's 2nd annual fly -fishing tournament is April 29.
- Fish by boat or from land all between Anclote Key west of Tarpon Springs to the southern tip of Anna Marina Island. This includes the entire Tampa Bay area.
- Proceeds go to area youth and helps them become part of the scouting program.
- To learn more and to register go to TampaBayScouting.org

Are you still getting dues notices from FFI?

- Please let club secretary Tom Gadacz know if the FFI is emailing you about your dues. If you're a member of SFF, the club takes care of sending your dues payment to the FFI.

Here and there

- Rick reported that the March 22 event at Carrollwood Village was successful. He attended along with David Redd.
- Volunteers are needed. Summer Youth Casting events include Riverview Civic Center June 15 and June 29 and Carrollwood Village Park July 7 and July 21. See Rick Warfel after the April meeting.
- Cliff Nigh reports the USF vessel tour will take place this fall.

Rick Warfel: Vision & Values Awards from 2008 to 2023

Congratulations to the winners of our 2023 *Vision and Values Awards*, David Redd and Quin Berry. Here's a list of award recipients going back to the starting year.

Year	Recipient(s)	President
2008	Paul Sequira	Ken Hofmeister
2009	Tom Gadacz	Ken Hofmeister
2010	Mark Hays, Richard Oldenski, Joe Dail, Pat Damico	Ken Hofmeister
2011	Ken Hofmeister	Tom Gadacz
2012	Tom Hummel	Tom Gadacz
2013	Bill AuCoin	Tom Gadacz
2014	Paul Sequira	Tom Gadacz
2015	Karen Warfel	Kirk Burton
2016	Tom Trukenbrod	Kirk Burton
2017	Tom Gadacz	George Hasletine
2018	Bob Burkard, Bill AuCoin	George Hasletine
2019	Alan Sewell	George Hasletine
2021	Tim Elms	Rick Warfel
2022	Bruce Evensen, Bill Scarola	Rick Warfel
2023	Quin Berry, David Redd	Rick Warfel

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

Suncoast Fly Fishers now has 136 members including 18 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.

Suncoast Fly Fishers

P. O. Box 40821
St Petersburg, FL 33743
www.suncoastflyfishers.org

Club Officers

Pres: Rick Warfel
Vice Pres: Quin Berry
Secretary: Tom Gadacz
Treasurer: Karen Warfel

Board of Directors

Bill Scarola, Bob Burkard, Bruce Evensen, Ryan Sollars, Cliff Nigh, David Redd, 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, Quin Berry

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: Great BBQ, Best Gear Deals, & Chico Fernandez



Speaker Chico Fernandez at the lectern with SFF President Rick Warfel and Walt Durkin (middle) president of the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club.

This year's Hog Roast and Silent Auction was the best ever. Bigger attendance (126). Bigger bottom line. Great BBQ. Super-duper deals on flies and gear. Plus, our speaker was the legendary Chico Fernandez.

Chico was (and still is) one of the pioneers of saltwater fly fishing. He talked about those early days in South Florida. They used to hook up with massive tarpon on the Keys bridges. The problem was, they fished from the bridge so they couldn't land those behemoths.

Chico is a native of Cuba and started fishing with his dad and uncles at an early age. His father was exiled in 1951 and went to Miami. But two years later he was able to go back to Cuba and he did very well financially. They had a big home. Chico had a Mercedes (and raced a Ferrari.) Then, political turmoil interrupted things, and the family had to retreat to Miami.

Chico is a native of Cuba and started fishing with his



Chico is about to slurp up Smitty's delicious banana pudding. See page ___ for the recipe.

In South Florida he fished with a spinning rod at first and loved to work walk the dog lures. Then he was introduced to a fly rod and fly fishing has been his thing ever since. He caught many, many snook. One thing led to another and he met and fished with many fly fishing stars of that period -- Joe Brooks, Ted Williams, Norman Duncan, Stu Apte, Little John Emory, Flip Pallott, Capt. Bill Curtis. The list goes on. He fly fished with Bill Curtis for 50 years or so.



Chico browses auction items

Fast forward to 1980. Chico told about catching that record 42-pound redfish on a trip to the outer banks of North Carolina. His trip was sponsored by the tourism bureau but there was a mix-up in communications with the guide. He voiced some skepticism (or maybe worse) about taking "some foreigner" fishing. He had the wrong kind of boat. "Push pole was not in his vocabulary," Chico said. He did take Chico to a huge school of about 50 redfish but somehow he expected Chico to be able to cast 200 feet or more. Well, they negotiated that and finally he put Chico in casting range. Chico said the 42-pounder followed his fly, pushed, pushed, and pushed. The red finally gobbled it up.

Fifty years ago he often fished the Tamiami Trail canals with Capt. Bill Curtis. And he's still hooked on catching brackish water gamefish. The Tamiami Trail canal has always been one of his favorite fly trip destinations. He fly fishes from a canoe -- "I'm a canoe man to the core." -- and favors canals and rivers that run north to south all the way to Florida Bay. He'll pole a short distance away from the highway and with so much vegetation, he said, he is in the wilderness with birds and orchids..

Bill

Bob Burkard: We have two outings in April
(1) Hillsborough River and (2) Everglades Canals



Bob Burkard,
Chairman of the
Outings
Committee

We are having two official club outings this month. On Saturday, April 21 we are fly fishing the Hillsborough River from Trout Creek Conservation Park. Then, we are having a second multi-day outing April 26-30, Thursday-Sunday where our members will be fly fishing for exotics and native fishes in the Everglades canals.

#1: Trout Creek Conservation Park on the Hillsborough River, Saturday, April 22

It's just a little north of Temple Terrace. You'll Take I-4, then go north on I-75 and exit on Morris Bridge Road. Kayak and canoe fishers will find lots of fishy locations. There are a few places near the park where you can fly cast from shore. Here's [a link to](#)

[more park info.](#)

Fly fish in the morning then meet up by noon for a picnic lunch at a park picnic table. You'll see the Suncoast Fly Fishers sign. A \$10 gift certificate goes to the member catching the longest bass. Measure it and take a picture of it before you release it.

#2: Everglades Exotics Outing, April 26 to April 30

Fly fishing for bass, bream, and exotics in the Everglade canals has become a Suncoast Fly Fishers tradition. Since joining our club 10 years ago, I have heard many stories of hundreds of fish caught per day in these canals. I am excited to be a part of this adventure this year.

Two groups of our SFF anglers will be heading to the Everglades in late April to catch hundreds of exotics— peacock bass, cichlids, oscars, jaguar guapotes – plus native fishes– snook, bass, bream. And, yeah, mudfish. A \$10 gift certificate awaits the member who catches the longest exotic. That's probably going to be a peacock bass.

Bruce Evensen and Bill Scarola are leading one group which will be staying at [Roland and Mary Ann Martin Marina & Resort](#) in Clewiston, which is on the south side of Lake Okeechobee. This group fishes on some especially productive waters off of the New River Canal that parallels Highway 27 south of Clewiston. Talk to Bruce or Bill at the meeting.

Alan Sewell is your go-to person for fishing canal waters farther south. This group will be staying at the [La Quinta Inn in Sunrise](#) near Fort Lauderdale. Talk to Alan at the meeting.

EXIT I-4 TO I-75.
Directions to Trout Creek Conservation Park

- 8.1 miles**
Take exit 9 to merge onto I-75 toward Ocala
- 0.3 miles**
Keep left to merge onto I-75 North toward Temple Terrace, Ocala
- 5.6 miles**
Take exit 266 onto CR-582A, Morris Bridge Rd
- 0.3 miles**
Keep left toward Zephyrhills
- Turn left onto Morris
- 0.5 miles**
Turn left
- 1.2 miles**
Take a slight left turn
- 250 feet**
Arrive at the destination
- Trout Creek Conservation Park**

Continued on next page

P2/Bob Burkard: We have two outings in April
(1) Hillsborough River and (2) Everglades Canals

If you're interested in either of these expeditions then attend Thursday's meeting to get up to date information as well as what gear to bring and where the groups will be fishing. You can call the hotels to reserve a room (if available). Be sure to tell them you're with the Suncoast Fly Fishers to get a discount.

Club Picnic on Saturday, Alligator Alley (I75) Rest Area, Mile Marker 34

Both fly groups will meet up at noon on Saturday or a club-sponsored picnic lunch and to compare fishy stories. Look for the SFF sign at one of the picnic tables. This rest area is about 11 miles west of the Toll Plaza. It has a boat ramp, too. Here's a [link to more rest area info.](#)

Did somebody say *red tide*?

I expect that you are as sick of red tide blooms interfering with our monthly outings as I am. We cancelled our March Don Coleman Invitational which already had been rescheduled from December to March due to another outbreak of red tide.

These HABS - "Harmful Algae Blooms" -- have happened much too frequently over the last year. So, in response to requests from our SFF Members, our SFF Outings Committee has agreed on a new process.

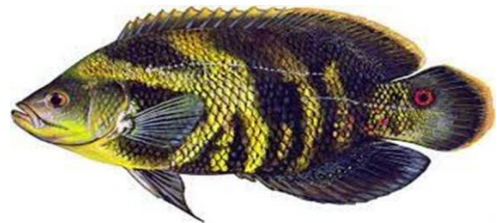
So, now, Instead of cancelling an outing due to Red Tide, we will either move the outing to a fresh water location or we will find a salt water location that is unaffected by this evil algae. We will do our best to inform our members by sending email blasts and keeping the website updated.

Bob

Can you identify Florida's canal exotics?



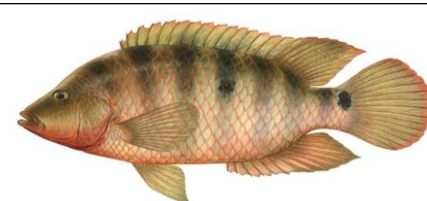
Peacock Bass – Intentionally Stocked



Oscar



Jaguar Guapote



Mayan Cichlid

Rick Redd, SFF Co-Founder and Avid Tarpooner

By Annie Mitchell

Our March meeting speaker was a blast from the club's past: That would be SFF founder Rick Redd! He and his coffee cups (we'll get to those) entertained us with stories of fly fishing for tarpon and how fly fishing in Tampa Bay used to be a whole lot better.

Rick recommends that we all get involved in any and all conservation groups we can find. The water quality of the bay is not good, our bait fish are greatly depleted, and fishing guides are letting their clients keep way too many snook and reds.

It's a good idea to listen to Andy Mill's podcast as he interviews old time tarpon fishermen. Their perspective tells us what the bay should be. There used to be huge schools of tarpon in Homosassa. The tarpon population has improved slightly but it isn't what it used to be. If you really want to get good at tarpon fishing and learn an area, hire a guide. Also, invest in Andy Mill's tarpon book. It's worth the \$100 or so price tag.

If you want to catch a tarpon don't fish the passes. That's where the chummers love to fish. Forget Anna Maria Island too. Egmont Key is still a good place. Make sure you put the fly just ahead of the fish so it sees the fly but doesn't get spooked. Make sure that if a tarpon goes in the channel or you see a shark you cut the line. We've lost too many beautiful tarpon to sharks as it is.

Rick caught his first tarpon at Long Bayou with a glass minnow fly fishing with Carl Hanson, another SFF star. Rick has been addicted ever since. He caught his first big tarpon on a fly at Boca Grande. He used to fish Passage Key with Capt. Paul Hawkins, but the geography has shifted. It's now wider and longer than it used to be. In fact, there used to be a lake there and people used to live on the key.

Rick brought a few coffee cups with him. Each cup's rim was covered with chewed up tarpon flies. Every time he would catch a tarpon and he could recover the fly, he would save it on the coffee cups. Clearly Rick knows his stuff based on all those little trophies he brought.

If you want to try for a medium sized tarpon, then the Everglades has them all year long. According to Rick, a laid up tarpon is the best tarpon. Try to go after them after a hard rain in ponds and brackish water where they congregate near drainage systems.

Rick then went through a lot of the gear he uses. He recommends using a lot of Mason line in your leader as it unfurls those heavy tarpon flies well. Although Carl Hanson liked 7-foot rods, Rick likes a 9 footer.. He says use an 11-12 foot leader. Don't use wimpy line. And make sure you use the part of the rod near your hand to fight the fish, the rest of the rod needs to be pointed straight at the fish. When you cast, never let go of the fly line. If you get a skiff, make sure the rod tubes are fore and aft so you don't run the risk of breaking things.

Although flies seem to be getting smaller, Rick still likes flies with a size 1 hook. He prefers dark colored flies so he can see them. He says never take your eyes off the fly. Keep working the fly so the fish will follow it.

Annie



Rick Redd, SFF co-founder with a long time focus on catching tarpon on the fly. (Tom Gadacz photo)

Tom Gadacz: Rick Redd and our club's beginning

Rick Redd was one of the founders of SFF. That was in 1998 or 1999.

The founders also included Jim Stewart, creator of the Snook-a-Roo fly, Jim McPhail, Hank Hauser, Tom Thesus, Tom Conway, Layne "Smitty" Smith, Alan Sewell, and Robert Fischer.

They drew up a set of by-laws in 1991 and called the club Suncoast Fly Fishers. They began to meet at the Wyoming Antelope Club.

Tom



Here with President Rick Warfel are two of the co-founders of the Suncoast Fly Fishers. That's Rick Redd in the middle and Robert Fischer on the right.

Capt. Pat Damico: Sight-casting to snook in skinny water

I caught this big snook on the Chassahowitzka River in March fishing with Capt. Bryon Chamberlain. Skinny water. Big snook.

I was throwing a synthetic baitfish pattern with TFO's BVK rod and reel.

As you may know, Bryon is a terrific guide.

Pat



Capt. Pat Damico with the big snook he caught sightcasting to linesiders in skinny water on the Chassahowitzka River.

Seven Club Fly Fishers fly fish Flamingo area. Meet Croczilla

Seven Suncoast Fly Fishers got kind of a head-start on the April outing. They went south and fly fished in the Flamingo area at West End Lake and Nine Mile Pond. Some also fished the Miami Canal along I75.



Gene Berger poses with Croczilla, an infamous resident of Nine Mile Pond near the town of Flamingo on Florida Bay.

By the way, “Nine Mile Pond has a famous (infamous?) occupant. That would be Croczilla, a 14-foot-crocodile. Our guys weren’t intimidated. They even posed for pictures with Croczilla.

Our brave fly fishers were Bill Scarola, Casey Caissie, Woody Miller, Gary Sundberg, Gene Berger, Tony Piazza and Bruce Evensen. They only caught six fish fly fishing Florida Bay out of Flamingo and Nine Mile Pond on Monday and Tuesday.



Bruce Evensen and Tony Piazza compare fishing notes on their kayaks.

However, fishing was a lot better in Miami Canal along I-75. Bill Scarola reported that Woody Miller “broke the code using a Myakka Minnow.” Woody, Gary, Berger and Scarola caught Mayan cichlids, jaguar guapotes, oscars, and bream.



That’s Bill Scarola and a canal exotic



Fly fishing for exotics on the Miami Canal



Casey Caissie with a photo-worthy snook.

Annie Mitchell: Fishing on Tim's Private Island



Annie Mitchell

As long time members of the SFF are aware, Tim Elms is a fly fishing aficionado. He'll fish any time, any place. The only thing is, he never, EVER, reveals his secret spots.

When he gave a presentation to the club on fishing for tarpon, we were lucky to get a 100X zoomed-in Google Map picture of a body of water. Why is Tim so secretive? Well, on Sunday April 2 Robert and I were able to confirm that Tim owns a private island. Could it be that he's a secret crypto-currency billionaire? Maybe he invested early in Tesla. How do you even buy an island? I decided not to ask.



Tim Elms

We were fishing with Tim because Robert won a fishing trip with him at the 2022 Hog Roast silent auction. Life events and pond scum prevented us from fishing together for a year, but we finally made it happen the first weekend in April.

Tim told us that a private plane would be waiting for us at the St. Pete/ Clearwater Airport. TIA was too crowded and conspicuous. As promised Robert and I boarded a private jet on the tarmac. There were no windows in the cabin, and after the stewardess gave us some complimentary drinks Robert and I blacked out. The stewardess woke us up what must have been hours later considering how sore my neck was. Tim keeps security tight because everyone is always trying to discover his secret fishing spots.

When Robert and I stepped out of the plane, we realized we had landed in a tropical oasis. Tim was there with an assortment of flies for us to tie on. As the sun came up, we walked to the first two of his many private ponds. He explained that all the fish in his ponds were his pets, and that the largest school of bass was known as The Wolf Pack. He also reliably informed us the fish were "really stupid," and it didn't matter all that much how we worked the flies as long as they moved quickly and noisily.



Annie: That's my husband Robert with one of the nice bass he caught on the fly at Tim Elm's private island resort.

As promised, shortly after we picked our spots on the bank, the Wolf Pack made their entrance. Imagine a school of about 40 five pound bass simultaneously jumping into the air after minnows like a school of hungry Jacks. That's the Wolf Pack. For the next hour and a half the Wolf Pack would make kamikaze assaults every few minutes. Robert caught two of them, and they happened to be the biggest bass he has ever caught. Both were caught on a white Crazy Charlie. He caught smaller bass, too.

I caught my third biggest bass of the day on a huge dark colored popper, and I caught two smaller ones on my own white Crazy Charlie. Tim wasn't kidding when he said the fish wanted the fly moving fast and loud. I swung the rod down while I stripped the popper in for maximum effect. We tried fishing more slowly for bluegill and Mayan cichlid, but none of them were interested. Later in the morning at a different pond Robert caught a snook on a white muddler minnow tied by my dad, Mark Hays. Tim won that fly and others Dad tied at the 2023 Hog Roast.

Tim's island is definitely closer to the Equator than St. Pete because it was an absolute sauna by noon. I made sure to ask for a travel pillow for the nap on the flight home. I have to thank Tim again for the wonderful morning. Tim, I promise I'll never tell anyone your secrets!

Annie

Tony Piazza: Hillsborough River Cruise. Did it Rain?



Bruce Evensen's Fly Tiers group took a break for an afternoon cruising excursion on the Hillsborough River.

With a date set and pontoon boats reserved we were greeted with a forecast of cool temperatures and a 70% chance of rain. We sucked it up and pressed on with our plans.

Meeting at noon we departed under cloudy skies but no rain yet. We worked our way up river for a few miles, then turned around heading for downtown Tampa. Our first stop was at Ulele Springs where Patti Nasrallah gave us a guided history tour. Having been on the water all of two hours we decided it was time to eat something so off we went to the "Armature Works", an old factory converted into an indoor food court.

With full bellies it was back on the boats and down river, passing Riverwalk, Tampa University, the Convention Center, the Gasparilla Pirate Ship, and under the Davis Island causeway to get a waterside view of the *little shacks* (sarc) on the western side of Davis Island.

Not finding anything close to our price range we headed back to downtown and a refreshment stop. One group found their way to the Columbia Restaurant for pitchers of Sangria while another group found a great bar serving excellent Margaritas and Mojitos.



Left to Right Standing: Dennis and Cindy Marquis, Barb & Bruce Evensen, Kathy Piazza, Patti Nasrallah, Bill and Pat Scarola, Gary and Patty Sundberg. Kneeling: Tony Piazza, and Troy Dillman. Photographer who couldn't be in the photo: Beth Ann Dillman

Then back to the boat and up the Hillsborough River to our starting point. Then it was time for more food at "Ricks on the River".

And there was not a drop of rain all the time we were on the water.

It made for a perfect day.

Tony



Bruce

The Mop Fly
Bruce Evensen & Bill
Scarola



Bill

This is one of two Evensen-Scarola Flies of the Month for Suncoast Fly Fishers. Bruce and Bill led fly tiers through the steps at Bruce's fly tying studio on Tuesday, April 11. The mop fly will work for you for bass and bream on the Hillsborough River and also for exotics on the Everglades canals. Fly tying sessions at Bruce's Fly Tying Studio are on Tuesdays starting at 6 pm. The address is 531 80th Avenue North in St. Pete.

Materials

Hook: jig style, as stated above, or 'J' hooks sizes 4 & 6, b-10 stingers, etc.
NOTE, you can add a small split shot above the fly on your line or add a few lead wraps to the hook shank before adding the mop material
Body. Mop piece in assorted colors, (Bill's favorite is chartreuse) If you use the yarn type mop material you can make the bodies longer.
Head. Estaz in assorted colors. Use contrasting colors to the mop body color. Be creative!
Thread. Match colors to material you are using. bright red works well also.
Glue. Super or nail glue
Lead. Lead or tungsten wrap, optional



Mop Flies

The flies above show many different looks to the Mop Fly.

Tying Sequence:

1. Wrap hook shank from eye to above the hook point
2. Add several wraps of Estaz, 2 -3 should do it. just behind the hook eye or jig head.

NOTE: add lead now if desired.

3. Tie in a piece of mop material just behind the Estaz. Note, mop material should hang freely past the bend.



Bruce

The Miakka Minnow
with Bruce Evensen & Bill
Scarola



Bill

This is a second fly of the month for the Everglades canal outing and the Hillsborough River outing. It's a great fly or fresh water - brim, oscars, cichlids, bass, gas. Larger patterns work in the salt, too. Bruce and Bill led fly tyers through the steps at Bruce's Fly Tying Studio on Tuesday April 11. Fly tying sessions start at 6 pm. Bruce's fly tying studio address is 531 80th Avenue North in St. Pete.

Materials

Tail: Marabou, chartreuse, white, pink, etc..

Body: Braids in gold, silver, copper or pearl

Eyes: Stick on eyes sizes 3.5 -4 mm

Glue: UV epoxy & your favorite eye glue, ex. E-6000.

Thread. Flat waxed white, clear mono or colors to match your braid and or marabou

Hook. B-10 stinger, size-4-6 and or 1/16-1/32 jig hooks. Lead wrap is optional

Tying Steps

1. Wrap hook shank
2. add a small clump of marabou just in front of the hook bend., cut it so u leave a square tail approx. 1/2 " long.
3. Add a few lead wraps over the thread wraps if desired
4. Tie in the braid on top of the marabou anchor point, bring the thread forward and build up a teardrop shape. Be sure to have the largest part just behind the hook eye or the jig head if using a jig hook. Whip finish the material.
5. Attach eyes, one per side.
6. Cover the entire body of the braid with UV epoxy and cure..



Myakka minnows. Be creative. Mix and match colors of marabou and braids, and tie it in different sizes.

Smitty's Fly of the Month for April: Timberwolf



The Timberwolf fly makes a good dropper behind a Crystal Beetle or Sponge Spider fly. Tie it to an 8-10-inch piece of two or four pound test mono. Then hang on for you might get a lot of doubles like I do.

Smitty



Timberwolf

Materials:

Hook: Mustad 3366 size 8

Thread: Danville's flatwaxed nylon red or black

Abdomen: Medium chenille color of choice (original was peacock herl)

Body: Danville flatwaxed nylon (of chosen color)

Collar: Neck or saddle hackle in a complementary color. See note below.

Cement: SHHAN

NOTE I prefer saddle hackle because when preened it has a full feather of barbs that are the same height and allows me to tie a lot of flies with a single feather.

Tying Sequence:

1. Place the hook in the vise and lay down a base wrap to bend the hook.
2. Attach the chenille and create a ball at the bend with 3 wraps of material; first wrap at tie in point, second wrap right next to the first and third wrap on top and between the first two. Tie off and remove excess chenille.
3. Use thread to create a nice tapered body ending $\frac{1}{8}$ " behind the hook eye.
4. Take hackle feather, hold by tip and preen back barbs so they are perpendicular to the stem and snip off about half that tip, leaving you enough to attach to hook.
5. After attaching, make 3 or 4 hackle wraps trying not to advance the hackle forward. Tie off using a half-hitch tool to place 2 thread wraps tightly against the now erect hackle. Repeat 2-turn half-hitch, locking everything in place. Cut thread and cement.

More Notes:

1. For a hardier fly coat thread wraps with SHHAN before you attach hackle.
2. Use different abdomen/body color combinations for this fly; i.e. yellow/black (think bumble bee), chartreuse/red, white/red, purple/black, or the original - peacock erl abdomen, red body with grizzly hackle. If you use peacock herl make sure to tie about 4 or 5 herls in by the tips then dub them by twirling them around the thread creating a herl rope. This makes the herl stronger. Tie in to create the ball for the abdomen.

Smitty's Banana Cream Pudding

This dessert was a star at the 2023 Hog Roast and Silent Auction



That's Layne Smith with 2023 Hog Roast speaker Chico Fernandez who is about to enjoy Smitty's delicious banana cream pudding.



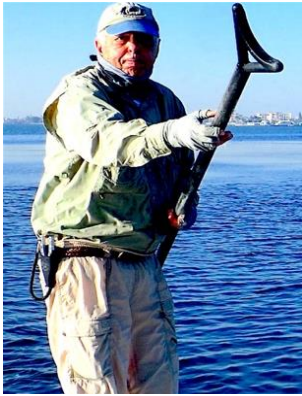
And here it is ready to serve. Smitty acknowledges that the ingredients listed below, may be more than enough for six.

INGREDIENTS (serves six)

- One 5.1-oz and one 3.4-oz package of Instant Jell-O French Vanilla Pudding mix. (If unavailable, you can substitute Jell-O Banana Cream pudding mix.)
- Four cups whole milk (cold)
- One box Nabisco Nilla Wafers
- 16-oz tub EXTRA CREAMY Cool Whip topping. Allow to thaw in the fridge.
- 12 bananas

DIRECTIONS

- Empty both boxes of pudding mix into a large mixing bowl. Add 4 cups of cold milk and stir until thick (about 2 to 3 minutes).
- Peel and slice into ¼" disks 10 bananas (I like lots of bananas in my pudding). Incorporate bananas evenly into pudding.
- Carefully fold in Cool Whip until no white is showing.
- Line the bottom of your presentation bowl with a single layer of Nilla wafers. With a large ladle start carefully spooning in pudding.
- If you are using a clear bowl, rim the bowl by standing Nilla wafers on end around the bottom of the bowl. If you are using an opaque bowl, skip this step and fill the bowl to halfway point then lay down another layer of Nilla wafers (do the same for a clear bowl).
- Finish filling bowl with pudding. Use the remaining 2 bananas cut in disks or on the diagonal to decorate top of pudding along with the remaining Nilla wafers in a pleasing design.



Capt. Pat Damico: Captain's Corner

Quick and careful sight casting

Sight casting to visible fish is the most exciting way to catch larger fish with any equipment, but especially with a fly rod. If you have balanced tackle and the proper fly it must be quickly and carefully placed so the fish can see it. Wind, tidal movement, boat position and direction of the cast must always be considered. If you are executing all the essentials to make a good fly cast, how do you stop the fly at the correct spot to achieve much needed accuracy? At shorter distances, you can false cast to the side of the intended spot then deliver the cast to the target. This takes time and risks spooking your quarry especially when the sun can cause the fly line's shadow to scare the fish. As your fly approaches the correct spot, pinch the fly line with your line hand as it slides between your thumb and index finger to achieve accuracy. Some lawn practice is necessary to do this well and always pay big dividends when on the water.

Captain Pat

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



Jonas Magnusson, Fly Fishers International Certified fly-Casting Instructor

Jonas Magnusson: Casting tip of the month

Do you lose control just before delivery?

The Suncoast Club recently hosted a casting clinic. I helped out and noticed one error that several intermediate casters there made. They were making nice false casts and then suddenly they lost control just before their delivery. I have suffered from the same malaise.

All casters have a certain length of line they can comfortably carry in the air false casting. Beginners can't carry much line but little by little they can carry more line. We refer to that length as their carry. Distance casters can and must carry say 100' of line to be able to reach 120'. So, the carry length is highly individual. As we practice, we can carry more line.

Back to our intermediate casters – it turned out they were slipping line (releasing a bit of line on the back cast and/or front cast). Thus, they were increasing their carry, and some didn't even realize it, and in the end, they had moved past their carry limit. What happens then is that the line can't be kept straight neither in front nor in the back and control over the line is lost. Consequently, they were introducing slack into their cast with the known outcome. The remedy is to teach a caster where his/her carry limit is. That task turns out to be very easy. Carry more and more until control is lost, that length is a bit too long. Mark the line with a marker at that point.

So, now we have established the individual's carry limit. Then we just have some line at the ready to be shot on delivery. When our casters observed their carry limit and then shot the line, they suddenly were able to get more distance than previously. **(Every Jonah has a Whale)**

Jonas

Fly Gear for Sale or Swap

Alan Sewell is selling his Gheenoe, \$3,500. Email sewellalan@yahoo.com


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Fishy Funnies

Jack Daniels Fishing Story

I went fishing this morning, but after a short time I ran out of worms.

Then I saw a cottonmouth with a frog in its mouth.




Frogs are good bass bait.

Knowing the snake couldn't bite me with the frog in its mouth, I grabbed it right behind the head, took the frog, and put it in my bait bucket.

Now the dilemma was how to release the snake without getting bit. So, I grabbed my bottle of Jack Daniels and poured a little whiskey in its mouth. Its eyes rolled back and it went limp.

I released the snake into the lake without incident and carried on fishing, using the frog.

Not long after, I felt a nudge on my foot. It was that damn snake ... with two more frogs.



Life is good.

theflyfishing-store.com/the-funnies/



Every-family-has-that-one-kid-wisconsin-brothers-fish-photo-goes-viral/ HT Bob Hood

Bill Scarola's Fishy Puns

I hear that there are some *fish-ous* rumors that my fish puns aren't real!
I can assure you they are O-FISH-AL!!!

Actually 've been *HERRING* that folks want *mor-ay* puns.
Be assured I do them just for the HALIBUT !!!

OPAH-lease, COD I get an Amen.
Now stop *FLOUNDERING* around and go *FISHING!!!*

Bill AuCoin: Flyfisher Flyover



Got a car, got a map, got a fly rod? -- Then you can fly fish for exotics in the Everglade canals. Yeah, Chico. ([Fly Fisherman](#))

Oscar the grouch -- No, not Oscar the Muppet. I'm talking about the grouchy invasive in the Everglades canals. ([Hatch Magazine](#))

What's the best fly to catch an oscar? Well, Here's a picture of a guppy. I read that if you put an oscar in a fish tank it will eat the guppies. So, maybe we should fish a fly that looks like a guppy. Take a look ([guppyexpert.com](#))



So which fly looks like a guppy? How about the Myakka Minnow? And, perhaps not coincidentally, that's Bruce and Bill's fly of the month. ([Gibby's Myakka Minnow](#))



Uh-oh-- Florida redfish, including Tampa Bay redfish, have medications in their blood. It's coming from medications that find their way from flushing toilets to the bay. The medicated redfish have regular heartbeats and are not showing signs of psychotic behavior, schizophrenia, or paranoia. And not just in Tampa Bay. This.is.not.good. ([Bonefish and Tarpon Trust](#))

Ninety-Two-in-the-Shade -- Yeah, that's one of the Tom McGuane classics. I bought the paperback for a couple of bucks at our Trash 'n' Treasures meeting. And this week I noticed it's being considered as the book for discussion by members of the Angler's Journal Book Club. He'll always be known as a writer but in an earlier era he actually guided anglers for bonefish, permit, tarpon, sawfish. This article is a few years old but it's, like, evergreen.. ([Angler's Journal](#))

Really? Did fishing guides used to yell at their clients? Well, I have heard that a few did some years ago down in the Keys. The subject came up as Orvis' Podcaster Tom Rosenbauer interviewed writer Tom McGuane about his career, his love of fishing, and lots of other subjects including, yeah, what he thought of guides who yelled at their clients. ([Orvis](#))

Big tarpon will be migrating along our beaches very soon. – If you hook one, be ready for a long, knock-down, drag out. You don't want to lose it except you will be so worn out you'll be tempted to break it off. Trophy tarpon tournament champ Andy Mill describes the feeling. It's not just physical. It's mental. ([Tail Fly Fishing](#))

ICYMI – To those who missed the Hog Roast and Chico Fernandez terrific talk. I'm sorry. Well, next year, then. And, for now, listen up. ([Millhouse Podcast](#))

Bill

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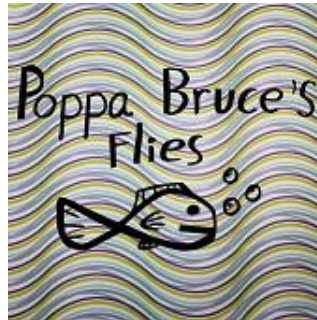


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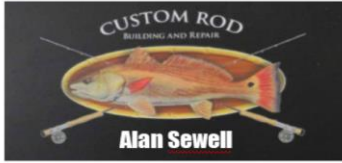


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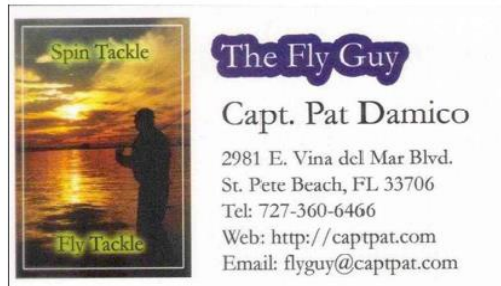
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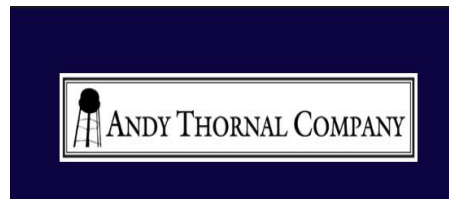
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