

On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg

May meeting speaker P3



Everglades Exotics P7,9



Hillsborough River P 7, 8



Is that you, Tim? P10



Is that you Troy? P12



Monster Bluegill P12





President's Message: May 2023

I have been fly fishing since I was a teenager, but I never did much saltwater fly fishing until we moved to the Tampa Bay area in the late nineties. I had looked up the local fly-fishing clubs but did not join while I was working because my job kept getting in the way.

I joined Suncoast Fly Fishers the month after I retired. I never would have guessed that SFF would become such an important part of my life. I have met wonderful people that I never would have met and been to places I never would have gone. It is a great club, but we should always keep working to make it even better.

I think that we have the greatest newsletter of any club that I know of. Our website is outstanding. We have terrific speakers at our monthly meetings. Our outings are held at some fantastic locations and almost always come with a free lunch. Yet attendance at our meetings, outings and events is not as robust as you would expect. I don't necessarily think this is unique to SFF. Attendance at churches, civic organizations and other clubs has not rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. People just got out of the habit of attending events in person.

Speaking for myself and the Board, our primary goal is to enhance member satisfaction. We are constantly working to identify the best outing locations and to find interesting and informative speakers for our meetings. I really hope to see more of you in person. I am going to challenge the other local clubs to participate at the Carl Hanson tournament on the Hillsboro River and the Don Coleman Invitational at Ft. DeSoto.

Our fly tying group does a terrific job tying at the meetings and at our weekly classes. We are going to resume some online classes and create videos for our social media site. I would ask everyone to support our social media by sending in content. If there is something that our members would like to see done differently, please let me or a board member know.

Thanks

Thanks. Stay safe and keep fishing!

Rick

Rick Warfel

Meetings, Outings, and More

Thursday, May 18-Meeting, 7 – 8:30 pm

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



Brad Lowman with a Fort De Soto Park redfish.

- Our speaker is Capt. Brad Lowman, a longtime friend of the Suncoast Fly Fishers. He'll talk about how to fly fish upper Tampa Bay at this time of the year. That's the location of our May 20 outing.
- Brad and Captain Lisa Lowman, and Captain Matt Foster. They are all USCG-licensed captains who guide fly fishers on the most productive waters from Tampa to New Orleans. The website is [Gulf Coast Fly](#).
- Outings committee chair Bob Burkard will award gift certificates to the fly fisher catching the longest bass at the April Hillsborough River outing and the fly fisher catching the longest exotic at the April Everglades outing.
- And, learn where other members plan to meet up and fish the May outing.

Saturday, May 20-Outing: Upper Tampa Bay. Lunch at the Crab Shack

- Fly fish north of Gandy Boulevard and south of I-275 on the Pinellas County side. There are wade-in and kayak launch areas on the North side of the Gandy where it meets the bridge.
- Fly fish in the morning then meet up with members by noon at the [Crab Shack](#) restaurant, 11400 Gandy Boulevard.
- A \$10 gift certificate goes to the member catching the longest redfish. Measure it and take a picture.

Future meetings and outings . Outings may change depending on red tide and other considerations.

- 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

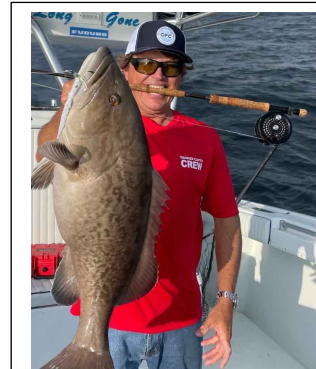
- November 16 meeting: Open house speaker
- November 18 outing: Fort De Soto Park

- December: no meeting
- December Outing: Don Coleman Invitational, Fort DeSoto Park

Meetings, Outings, and More

Suncoast Fly Fishes endorses Capt. Ed Walker for the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

- President Rick Warfel has sent a letter to U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo in support of Capt. Ed Walker to be appointed to Florida's at-large seat which is informally known as the sportfishing seat. A number of members also sent their personal endorsements.
- Captain Ed, who lives in Tarpon Springs, has been guiding sportfishers for 35 years. He was our January 2022 speaker (on Zoom) and talked about how he set a new IGFA world record. He caught a 20-plus pound grouper on the fly 60 miles out in the Gulf.
- Read President Warfel's endorsement letter in this issue on page 13. Here's an excerpt: *Ed Walker lives on Florida's Gulf Coast. He is a long-term, well-known charter captain who has already participated in many Gulf Council research initiatives. He has attended Gulf Council meetings in all five Gulf states. He has served on Gulf Council Advisory panels and, currently, he is Chair of the Reef Fish Advisory Panel.*



Capt. Ed Walker with his IGFA world record grouper which he caught on the fly.

Let's grow Suncoast Fly Fishers

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 your social media accounts.

Help introduce fly fishing to a new generation

Suncoast Fly Fishers with the time and fly casting skills can help this cause. See David Redd after the meeting to volunteer to teach fly casting and other basic fly fishing lessons to kids.

- Riverview Civic Center, June 15 and 29. From 9 to 11 am
- Carrollwood Village Park. July 7 and 21. From 9 to 11 am

Is Trout Unlimited starting a statewide Florida office, or what?

- Member Jack Collins has alerted us to this event announced by Trout Unlimited.
- TU has invited "fellow anglers, conservationists and TU members from across Florida for a fun, casual night of connecting, sharing cocktails and appetizers and learning about TU's plans to grow TU in the Sunshine State." Hors d'oeuvres are free for the listening.
- TU's inaugural event - perhaps the first of many - will be on May 25 from 6:30-9 PM at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club. Go [here](#) for more info and to RSVP.

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 120 members including 19 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.

Bob Burkard: May 20 Outing, Old Tampa Bay

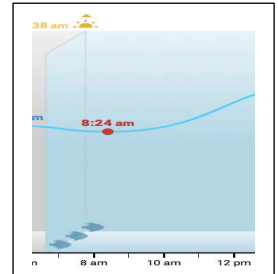


*Bob Burkard,
Outings
Committee
Chairman.*

The Pinellas County side of Old Tampa Bay has many acres of grassy flats with thick mangrove shorelines. Plus, it doesn't get heavy fishing pressure like the Weedon Island Preserve. It's perfect for wade fishers and kayak fishers. And we're going to have a nice incoming tide on May 20 to help the cause.

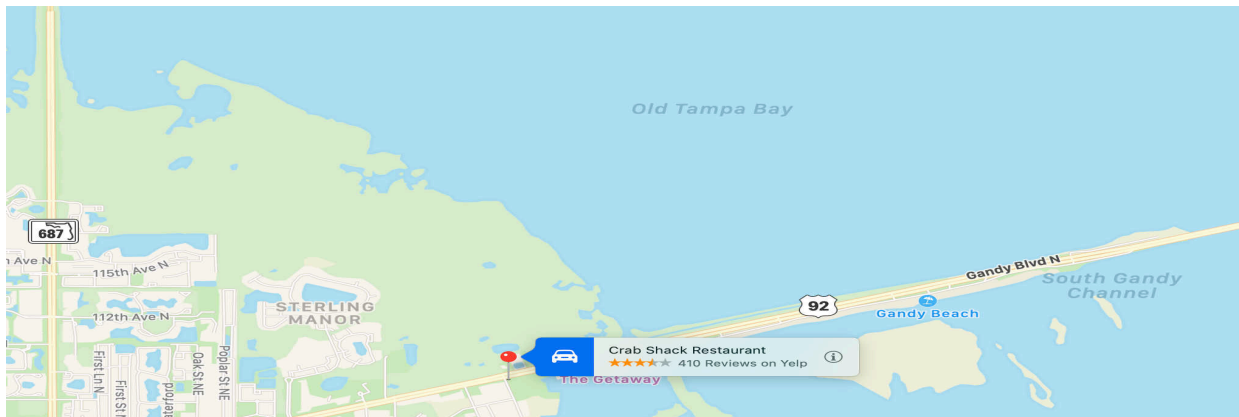
The member who catches the longest redfish wins the outing gift certificate and also takes the lead in that category in the annual outing tournament. Measure and shoot a picture of your longest redfish for the outing reward but also measure and shoot pictures of your longest seatrout, snook, and ladyfish because they also qualify for the annual contest. Meet up with other members by noon at the Crab Shack

restaurant, 11400 Gandy Blvd.



*Morning tides.
(tides4fishing)*

Bob



Fish north of Gandy Blvd and South of I-275 on the Pinellas County side of Old Tampa Bay. There's a kayak launch and wade-in areas on the north side where the causeway meets the bridge. But car parking is only on the south side of Gandy. Meet up by noon at the Crab Shack restaurant, 11400 Gandy Blvd. (Apple Maps)

<i>Leaders on the 2023 Outing Tournament Trail</i>			
Species	Winner	Length	Outing (Month)
Longest bream	Anne Mitchell	7"	Hillsborough River (April)
Longest black bass	Mark Hays	14.5"	Hillsborough River (April)
Longest exotic	David Redd	12"	Everglades Outing *(April)
Longest snook			
Longest redfish			
Longest ladyfish			
Longest seatrout			

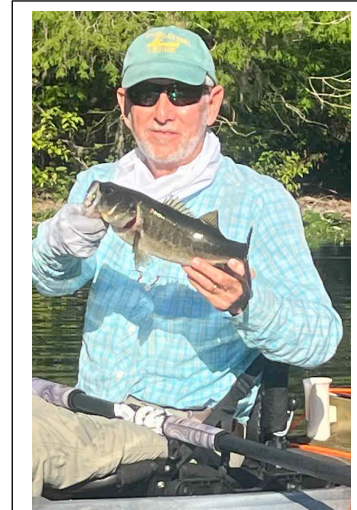
Bob Burkard: April Outings Report



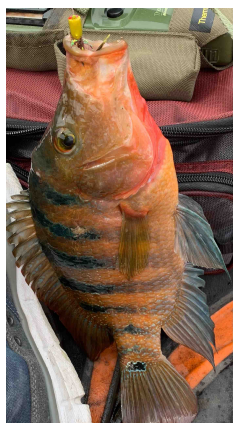
*Bob Burkard,
Chairman of the
Outings
Committee*

We had two outings in April, the Hillsborough River for bass and bluegill and South Florida's Everglades canals for exotics.

First, Hillsborough River at Trout Creek Conservation Park. Ten members launched their kayaks and fly fished the beautiful upper Hillsborough River. Bluegills were hungry and not too picky. But catching the longest bass earns Mark Hays a \$10 gift certificate for catching a 14.5-inch bass on a white snake fly. Except for award-winner Mark Hays. He caught a 14+-inch bass on a white snake fly. Wes Sobczak had a bluegill on the line and a big bass ate it and gave him quite a fight until it broke off. Other fishers were me, Bill AuCoin, Kelly and Wes Sobczak, Annie and Robert Mitchell, Alan Sewell, David Redd and Robert Fischer. Quin and Tina Berry joined the fishers for a pavilion picnic lunch. Anne Hays Mitchell measured and got a picture of one of her larger stumpknocker. It was yuge. 7 inches. She takes the lead on the annual tournament for that category.



*That's Mark Hays posing
with his 14.5-inch bass.*



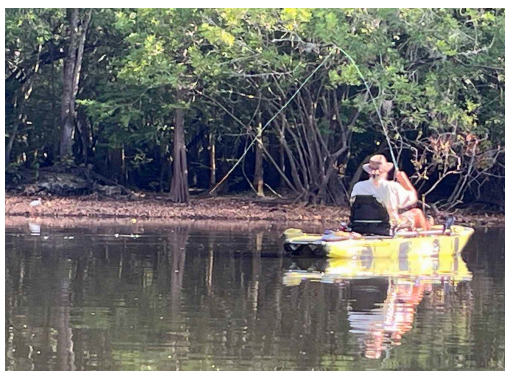
*David Redd's award-
winning 12-inch
Mayan cichlid.*

Second. Everglades Canals. There were two Everglade groups. Five guys headquartered in Clewiston and fly-fished a new spot off of Highway 27: Bruce Evensen, David Redd, Truk Trukenbrod, and Tony Piazza plus John, a non-member fly fishing friend. Mark Hays and his daughter Annie and her husband Robert Mitchell headquartered in Sunrise, near Fort Lauderdale. They didn't catch as many exotics as usual but they were all larger -- Cichlids, Peacock Bass, Oscars, Jaguar Guapotes.



*Do we have an award for the
smallest bluegill? Somehow
this one survived posing on
Bill AuCoin's gloves.*

And who caught the longest exotic? It was a close call because everybody was catching foot-long whatchamacallits. But we're going with David Redd who took a picture of one of one of his 12-inch Mayan cichlids. He gets the \$10 gift certificate for the longest exotic.



*(Left) Wes Sobczak
with another bream
on the line.*

*(Right) Lots of
wildlife on the river,
egrets, herons,
spoonbills. Oh, right,
and gators.*



Annie Mitchell: A River of Dinks



For my birthday this year, my dad bought former SFF member Ken Doty's Mad River canoe. Robert and I did a practice paddle with it at Clam Bayou early in April, and we fell in love with that canoe. It practically flies across the water compared to the old canoes my dad used to have.

Robert and I strapped the canoe on his truck as tight as we could and made the journey to Trout Creek Park for the outing. The canoe stayed in place, but Robert's knuckles were white as we drove over the Howard Franklin that morning. A few years ago we took another canoe to this outing on Robert's old SUV, and one of the straps came loose on the bridge. I don't know how neither of us needed a change of shorts after that.

Once we finally made it to the Hillsborough River we had a wonderful morning. The weather was a hair cooler than normal, and hardly anyone who wasn't with the SFF was on the river yet. I started with a gold spoon, but Robert quickly realized that white was the desired color. He tied a Smitty Beetle on my line and that was all she wrote. We lost track of how many bream (or is it brim) we landed. The biggest one I caught was a 7 inch Stumpknocker. Most of the fish were barely big enough to hook themselves.

Unfortunately neither of us caught a bass, which was the target fish for the outing. We heard from Robert Fisher that my dad had caught one, to which Robert said, "Of course he did!" Nearly all the fish we caught were Stumpknockers, but we did get a few small bluegill. The gators were out in force, but thankfully none of them got frisky with the canoe.

While we were hauling in all the dinky fish, I had an idea. Since we always give out awards at the Carl Hanson outing for largest fish and most fish, I think we should add an award for the smallest fish. We can call it "The Dinky." The award can be a really small gold trophy in contrast to the award for most fish which is a large gold trophy. Bob Burkard seemed to like this idea.

I always look forward to going to the Hillsborough River. There just aren't that many places in Pinellas County that can compete with the beautiful scenery and tranquility of that river. Also, I've always preferred freshwater fly fishing out of a canoe to any other type of fly fishing. The tackle is lighter, you don't have to worry about tides (red or otherwise), and it's rare that you're competing for a fishing spot with other anglers. Heck, I even like paddling and controlling the boat while the other person fishes.

My dad taught me how to control the canoe from the front when I was a little kid. He also taught me how to bring in fish for him. When he would hook a fish, he'd pull in some line then tip the rod to me. I would grab the fly line, pull the fish in, and say, "Put 'em in the bucket!" We had many excursions to Myakka, Chassahowitzka, and the Withlacoochee that I still vaguely remember. That's also likely why I've never been afraid of alligators.

Robert and I are planning on doing a lot more canoeing this summer. I have a strong feeling the Red Tide will be back in force, and I can't think of a state with a greater abundance of picturesque lakes and rivers to fish.

Annie

Annie Mitchell: Everglades 2023: Quality over Quantity



We got a little nervous about our trip to the Everglades this year when we saw that Fort Lauderdale had flooded about two weeks before our trip. I didn't think the Sunrise La Quinta would appreciate us fishing in their lobby with pieces of hotdogs and hand lines. Thankfully our hotel did not flood, and we were able to enjoy our three-day weekend.

As soon as we arrived at the first canal on Alligator Alley we saw schools of Mayan Cichlids and Bluegills next to the boat ramp. Despite the recent rain, the fish were still in their usual spots. Hallelujah! However, when we got out on the canal and started fishing it took a whole ten minutes to start catching fish. This is highly

unusual as one of us normally catches a fish on our first collective cast.

Once we found the fish, Cichlids first to be specific, we noticed a pattern. The fish were consistently larger than usual and we caught a lot more native fish than in the last few years. Normally we each catch 100 fish per day. This year we roughly averaged 50 per day. Certainly we prefer landing bigger fish, especially because you can eat them. We kept a small cooler full of Cichlids, Peacock Bass, and a few Oscars and Jaguar Guapotes on the second day.

The other difference from most years is that usually you find one or two fly patterns that work on the first day and stick with them all weekend. This year the fish were a lot pickier. We tried about 20 different patterns between the three of us. Depending on which canal we were in, the best ones were the white Smitty Beetle, the gold spoon, the orange Paul Sequira spider, white spiders, and various white minnow patterns. The fish were not interested in dark colors for the most part, although Robert and I had good luck on our second day with my Dad's cone-headed squirrel flies. The fish were very active, and they had little to no interest in sinking flies. They wanted to come up to the surface. At most they would go for a moderately sinking fly.

All three of us landed Peacock Bass and nearly identical 1.5 lb. largemouth bass. I think the most thrilling catch of these was when an angry Peacock took my white spider. None of us knew they even ate spiders!

We ran into some trouble on our second day at the main rest stop canal when Dad turned the trolling motor on and it was running at about half the power it was supposed to. Older club members may remember stories of Don Manning keeping a dozen uncharged trolling motor batteries in his boat, but we didn't have a spare. The problem was that we didn't stay at our usual La Quinta; we were next door at the newer hotel, and this one does not have a charging station. Dad did his best to baby the motor and drift with the wind, but as usual it was very windy Friday and Saturday. Around 2 pm the battery gave up, we were sunburned and fireant-bitten, so we went back to the hotel.

Robert and I had an adventure going to the Dania Beach Bass Pro Shops and then the nearby West Marine to procure a new battery. I'm trying not to complain as much about the traffic around here, at least for a few weeks. Dad and Robert managed to get the new and improved battery installed before dinner.

After all that we still weren't able to fish Sunday morning because the line of storms that had hit Pinellas County the day before was making its way to us. Thankfully we only drove through a few minutes of high wind and rain, and we made it back home safely.

I'm not sure what was different this time, but the fish we kept tasted so much better than usual. We figured out the fish kept better because we threw them in our live well, covered them with ice throughout the day, and kept them chilled overnight. Normally Dad doesn't take that much care of the fish so they get a little funky after two days in the cooler.

Annie

Tim Elms: Fly Fishing is two-handed

Howdy! The season is kickin' off pretty well. I've been praying for rain and we have had just a lil bit of it lately.

Over the last month I have had the pleasure of fishing with some of our members, family from out of town, and special guests. Try not to forget that you need to fish with both hands. Cast with your casting hand and fish with your opposite hand. This is key for success in Florida or any warm water fly fishing. You must be able to use both hands with confidence for success.



From the beginning to the end of your fishing both hands must be engaged. Even, try not to let your fly line go on your forward cast with your

hand. Use it as another guide and let the line slip through your fingers and be ready the minute the fly hits the water to strip. Then, strip, or feed the fish however you prefer. Remember all flies are different in the water and be aware of how you like to fish your fly. Popper? Pop that thing hard for bass, pop it slow for bream. Bait patterns? Watch the bait and mimic the best that you can. Some bait is really fast,

others are just barely moving, remember you cannot out strip a predator that is ready and willing to eat. Keep the fly moving is usually a good rule to follow, especially with snook as they know its not right the minute they get to have a good look at it.

Strip set you guys! Keep the rod as low as you can and set like you mean it. One split second you introduce slack or a bend on your set is all they need to not get hooked properly.

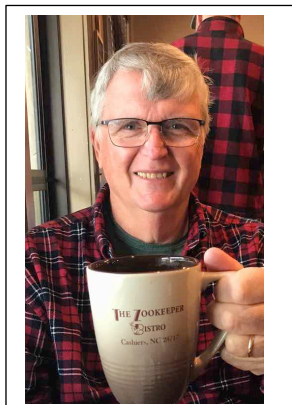
Fight with your opposite hand. Don't worry about the drag unless you have a whale. Your line hand is your friend for 90% of line control, hand drag, and hand retrieve. Keep the rod lower and use side pressure. Even on Bass this is helpful. Keep the fish down and be ready for moves they make. Remember we aren't trout fishing, we aren't protecting a 6x tippet.

Keep these all in mind next time you wonder why you didn't land as many as you should have. Cast with your casting hand and fish with your other hand.

Strip Strip Strip!!!!—Tim

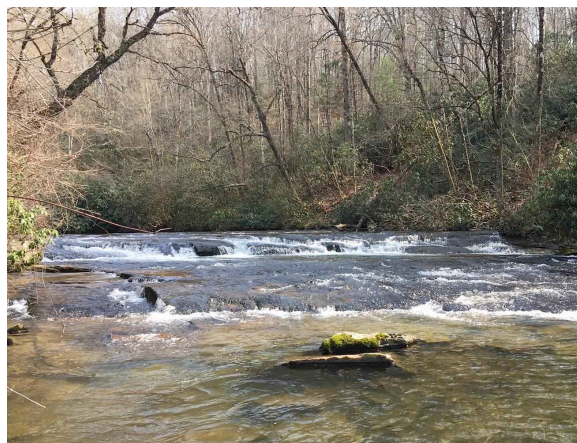


Jack Collins: East Fork of the French Broad River



Spring break this year was a trip to a timeshare condominium in Cashiers, NC. The first couple days were cold and rainy so we played cards and hung around the condo.

The drive to my spot was about 45 minutes in Rosman, North Carolina, East Fork of the French

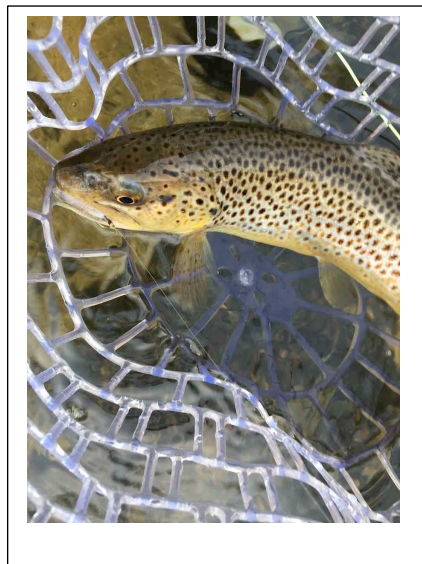


Broad River. This section of river is a Delayed Harvest stretch of about five miles.

After picking up a couple of “hot flies” and advice at the local fly shop, Headwaters Outfitters, I drove out to the river. It was a beautiful setting with multiple pullouts and very wadable water. As I was rigging up, a couple fishermen stopped to share some tips and brag on their earlier success. Now I was excited.

I slid down the bank with my 5 weight, a Pat's Rubber Legs and a Hares Ear nymph dropper. My first cast brought a fish to the Rubber Legs, but no joy. A few more fruitless casts and I waded up the river a few feet. A couple more casts into faster water and fish on. I brought a beautiful 11-inch brown to the net. Again, the Rubber Legs was the target. After a few more casts without any success, I moved a couple more times and decided to give this area a little rest. I walked upstream to the next fishy spot and tried a couple different droppers. I hooked a nice rainbow on the dropper but lost him with the flip of his tail as he headed back to his holding place. A couple more fly changes with an empty net and it was time to move upriver to scout more terrain. I found the honey hole, it was a deep, slow, flat section at the bend in the river. It was filled with at least a dozen or more fish. After about 100 casts and a dozen fly changes, I knew those fish couldn't recognize a tasty meal when they saw it

My second day on the water was quite a bit warmer. The water temperature was 48 degrees but the air had warmed to the mid-60s. There were a few flies rising, mostly midges. I remembered what the Fly Shop owner had said about mostly midges this time of year. So, I tied on a bushy top fly for visibility in the glare and shadows on the water and a size 24 midge nymph. It took me at least two to three frustrating minutes to tie the midge on my 5x tippet. But now, all rigged, I headed to the base of the waterfall, well below the college educated fish with high hopes. A few casts raised several smaller fish who took passes at the top fly, but no hookups. I shifted around the base of the falls and made several casts above the falls and followed the fly as it cascaded through the channels between the boulders. A half dozen casts and WHAM, fish on. A short frantic battle in the fast water below the falls and a 12-inch colorful brown trout slid into the net. Woohoo. Additional details at this [link](#).



Jack

Bill Scarola: Nice bass on residential ponds



I caught three nice bass fishing with Tim Elms on his neighborhood ponds. All were about 16.5 inches.

I caught two on a green/yellow red Clouser and one on a white Wooly Bugger.

Bill

Robert Fischer: Big bluegill. And a Gar, too



I caught the monster bluegill in a small lake in north Tampa. Also I caught a small gar.

Robert

Troy Dillman: Brookies and Browns in Pisgah Nat'l Forest



BethAnn and I caught brook trout and brown trout in Curtis Creek (Altitude 3,500 feet) in Pisgah National Forest in Western North Carolina.

(Right) BethAnn wore her "Florida Waders."

Troy



Rick Warfel: Club endorsement of Capt. Ed Walker



P.O. Box 40821
St. Petersburg, FL 33743-0821

May 13, 2023

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo,

I am President of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg which has 120-plus members. We enthusiastically endorse Capt. Ed Walker for Florida's At-Large seat on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council.

Our club purposes include promoting catch-and-release and habitat protection. Captain Ed Walker was one of our club speakers last year and updated members on grouper behavior and the importance of protecting grouper and amberjack reefs and migration routes.

Suncoast Fly Fishes is a charter member of Fly Fishers International and officers regularly collaborate with FFI leaders on Gulf fish conservation initiatives.

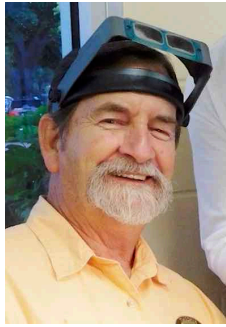
Ed Walker lives on Florida's Gulf Coast. He is a long-term, well-known charter captain who has already participated in many Gulf Council research initiatives. He has attended Gulf Council meetings in all five Gulf states. He has served on Gulf Council Advisory panels and, currently, he is Chair of the Reef Fish Advisory Panel.

The Gulf of Mexico is Ed Walker's longtime "place" of work, which he loves. He will bring hard-earned insights into the important task of managing Gulf fisheries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Warfel", written over a horizontal line.

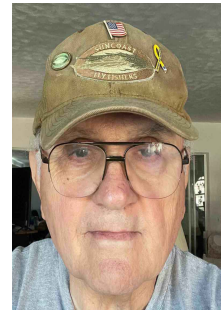
Rick Warfel
President, Suncoast Fly Fishers
RH_Warfel@yahoo.com
813-523-0692



Bruce

The Shimmer Fringe Minnow with Bruce Evensen & Bill Scarola

Bruce and Bill led fly tiers through the steps on Monday, May 8 at Bruce's fly tying studio. This is an excellent pattern for fishing salt and fresh water. You can tie it in different sizes to match the minnow size where you'll be fishing. You can also bend the hook and tie it in bend-back style to make it weedless. It will catch the eyes of redfish moving about the upper Tampa Bay grass flats during Saturday's outing.



Bill

MATERIALS

Hook: #2 circle hook or 3407 # 2, stinger # 1, 2

Body:

- a. white bucktail or white supreme hair
- b. ice dubbing shimmer fringe(long), minnow mix in pearl
- c. light green supreme hair or chartreuse bucktail
- d. ice dubbing minnow shimmer fringe, pearl, and peacock herl

Thread: white flat waxed

Eyes: 4mm red/black pupil

Glue: UV epoxy, eye glue



SEQUENCE

- 1-- Wrap hook shank w/ thread
- 2-- Add a small bit of white bucktail or supreme hair to underside of hook, OR add to top and turn it to underside of hook after a few wraps of thread.
- 3-- Add a bit of pearl ice dubbing fringe to both sides
- 4-- Add some green supreme hair or chartreuse bucktail to top
- 5-- Add several strands of peacock hurl over the top, and curl with the dull side of your scissors.
- 6-- Add eyes
- 7-- Cover eyes and thread wraps with UV epoxy.

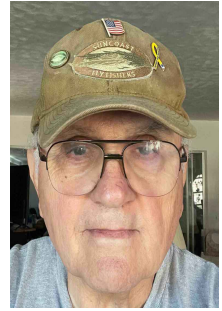
[Editor's note: Bruce and Bill lead fly-tyers through the steps at Bruce's Fly Tying Studio on Mondays. Fly tying sessions start at 6 pm. Bruce's fly tying studio address is 531 80th Avenue North in St. Pete.]



Bruce

Tie the Shiny Sides Baitfish with Bruce Evensen & Bill Scarola

Bruce and Bill will lead tyers through the steps on Monday, May 15 at Bruce's fly tying studio. This is a proven inshore pattern and a good choice to work the grass flats and sandy potholes in upper Tampa Bay grass flats during Saturday's outing.



Bill

MATERIALS

Hook: 3407 size 2, 1/0 or stingers-1, 2

Thread: Olive flat waxed

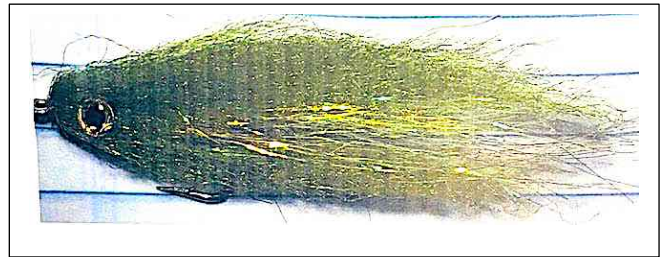
Body: Tan bucktail

Flash: Chartreuse shimmer fringe or crystal flash pearl, etc.

Body: Top & bottom -- olive EP fibers

Eyes: 4mm stick-on, silver/black

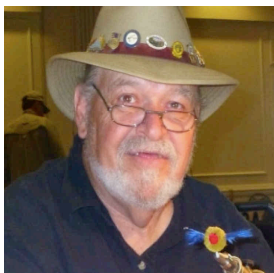
Glue: Your go-to club plus UV epoxy



TYING STEPS

- 1: Wrap hook shank.
- 2: Add a clump of tan bucktail on both sides of the shank and tie it straight back.
- 3: Add flash to both sides.
- 4: Add a bit of olive EP by tying them in forward ahead of the hook eye. They will be bent back after adding the bottom EP.
- 5: Add more EP fibers to the underside of the hook shank just as above. Once tied in, bend top and bottom back over the hook shank, and build up a thread dam just behind the hook eye. A clothes pin will be helpful to hold fibers in place until you finish the thread dam. Then whip finish.
- 6: Add your eyes. Keep them above the shank on the top EP fibers. You may need to trim the fibers to a fish shape!
- 7: Add UV epoxy to the eyes and thread dam.

Smitty's *Psycho*: Fly of the Month for May



The Psycho Fly is a proven fly on Tampa Bay for Trout, Snook, and Ladyfish, as well as Tarpon and Redfish. For Redfish use a sink tip or full sinking line to get the fly down because it is very buoyant. The big head pushes water in front (and fish can feel that.) The big head moving through the water also creates a vacuum behind it which makes the Bunny Boo tail more lively.

Smitty



White Psych and the Green Meanie Psycho fly. Smitty also ties it in purple and black to target tarpon.

Materials:

Hook: Mustad 3407 size 1 or 1/0 (or your favorite standard length saltwater hook)

Thread: Chartreuse flat waxed nylon

Tail: White Rabbit zonker strip (Magnum)*

Flash: Micro Flashabou

Body: White Body Fur. Or, use other colors for the tail and body. Buy *Body Fur* in small, medium, or large.

Eyes: 8mm (5/32") molded eyes

Coating: Softex

Weed guard: Optional (your favorite style)

Tying Sequence:

Step 1: Tie in thread above hook point and wrap back to bend. Tie in the zonker strip and post with about 10 wraps of thread to stand tail up slightly. This will help to keep from fouling.

Step 2: Tie in pearl Flashabou. Double two strands splay back on either side of the zonker.

Step 3: Tie in the leading edge of body fur and palmer as you would a hackle feather. Stroke material back after each wrap so you don't matt it down. Tie off and cut excess body fur away.

Step 4: Back-wrap over the leading edge of body fur to make it lay back. Taper head and whip finish.

Step 5: Glue on molded eyes with FletchTite Gel. Apply color with markers to show gills and other markings if you like.

Step 6: Apply *thin* coat of Softex to the top of the fly between eyes to create a diving head (similar to Dahlberg Diver). Too heavy of a coat will deform the head of the fly when it dries.

Weedguard optional. Tie in a 35# mono loop before step 1 or wrap a wire weed guard after step 3.



Capt. Pat Damico: Captain's Corner

Practice proper catch and release when fly fishing

A recent warming trend had been a boost to shallow water fly fishing frequently resulting in catching many fish. 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 fishermen 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. If holding a fish out of the water, hold your breath at the same time. The time should not exceed that. Most flies have a single hook that can be crimped or de-barbed before starting to fish. This means it will penetrate the fish's mouth easier and simplify removal from your quarry or your person. Do barbless hooks make it easier to lose fish? If constant tension is applied, no. When the hooked fish is close to the boat or you, grab the leader near 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 and the hook point will disengage allowing it to slip back into the water. All this without handling the fish.

Captain Pat

Fly fisherman and casting instructor Pat Damico charters "Fly Guy" in lower Tampa Bay. You can reach him at captpatdamico.com and 727-504-8649



Jonas Magnusson, Fly Fishers International Certified fly-Casting Instructor

Jonas Magnusson: How to cast straight

At the Suncoast Club's casting clinic there was a caster (right-handed) who asked "Why does my fly line hook to the left at the end of my casts, instead of laying out straight?" A kindred southpaw will hook right of course.

This one is a recurrent error. I have suffered from the same malaise. But it is also rather easy to cure. For any successful cure, though, the diagnosis must be spot-on. Why? This error happens if the tracking isn't straight.

How? On the back-cast, the caster doesn't throw the line straight behind, but well to the left of the caster.

This happens when the caster opens the wrist way too much in the horizontal plane and sends the line in a great big curve back, thus violating the 180-degree rule. On the forward cast even if the line is reasonably straight it will hook to the left.

If I can only give one piece of advice - here goes - **WATCH YOUR BACKCASTS**. As Yogi Berra said, "You can observe a lot just by watching."

Jonas

Read more on Jonas' website.... [Every Jonah Has A Whale](#)

For Sale or Swap

Alan Sewell sold his Gheenoe. And there's more. Email sewellalan@yahoo.com or call 727=470-4570

- 1) Wilderness Systems RIDE115 kayak - high seat - stand-up kayak with dry compartments. Includes two nice paddles, folding anchor, mini paddle, tackle crate with rod holders and many extras. Ready to fish. \$600.
- 2) Kayak Trailer – Continental,. Galvanized, three bunks plus - storage boxes. Carry up to four kayak. Spare tire, extra hubs and rims (in nice carry-on boxes), hub changing kit (grease, jack, gloves, tools, etc.) . Includes 1 7/8 2" male hitch and a hitch ball wrench plus other extras. \$600.

NOTE: Get the "quantity discount." Buy both kayaks and they're only \$600.

Bill Scarola's Fishy Puns

When you're fishing this fly you will have so much FINN.

I have a good EELING about this one.

I swear to COD, making these puns is giving me a HADDOCK!

What kind of hair do oceans have?

WAVY

How do snails fight?

They SLUG IT OUT.

How do you get an astronaut's baby to sleep?

You ROCKET.

Would you like to hear a joke about pizza?

I must warn you, it's a little CHEESY.

How do cows buy their clothes?

With CATTLE-LOGS of course.

Why do bees have sticky hair?

Because they use HONEYCOMBS!

Why don't you ever see an elephant hiding in a tree?

Because they're REALLY GOOD AT IT

What happened to the cat after she ate a ball of wool?

She had MITTENS!

Why was Cinderella kicked off the football team?

She kept RUNNING AWAY from the BALL!

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly it sank, proving that once again...
You can't have your KAYAK and HEAT it too!"

I once sent out ten puns to the club members, hoping that one of them would make y'all laugh!

NO -PUN -IN -TEN -DID!

A tomato family is walking down the road Baby tomato is falling behind, Daddy tomato goes back, smacks him on the head and says...
KETCHUP!!!"

Bill AuCoin: Flyfisher Flyover



They do this for redfish. Now snook? -- Are you ready for ten different snook management areas? Ten different snook seasons? It's okay by me. Snook are in trouble in the Tampa Bay area. ([Florida Sportsman](#))

Fly fishing from a canoe? – Author Joe Mahler is on board with fly fishing from a canoe and he explains why. I remember Chico Fernandez telling us at the Hog Roast that he loves to use a canoe to fly-fish the Tamiami Trail canals. . H/T Tim Elms. ([Epic Fly Rods](#))

Big bass on the fly – I really enjoyed the outing on the upper Hillsborough River but I didn't catch a bass. Catching one on the fly is still on my bucket list. Here's some helpful and up to date info about where the big bass roam. I'm all in. Btw, I read somewhere that in the U.S. the biggest largemouth bass are in the temperate zone from central Florida to south Georgia. Bass don't live as long in the subtropical zone, or something. ([MYFWC](#))

Central Florida Bass -- The spawn is done. But not for the reptiles. Summer is around the corner. How did the anglers of Kit Lake adapt? Read The Kit Lake Solace to find out. This is SFF member Chris O'Byrne's blog. ([Featherwater](#))

Jazz and fly fishing? Who wudda thunk it? A piano player and a film maker walked into a bar and discovered they both love fly fishing. Now there's a jazz band and they all love to fly fish. The band is touring the U.S., and the filmmaker is doing what he does. ([Angling Trade](#))

Okay, I'm going to barge in here. We all use common expressions like *barge-in*, *above board*, *long shot* and *clean slate*. Do you know where they come from? ([Southern Boating](#))

Hooked on bonefish -- Costa sunglasses has been making a series of "Hooked on" videos. This one is about bonefish and how casters need to place the fly in the right spot without causing big ripples. There's good news, too. Some historic bonefish fisheries are improving thanks to tagging and conservation programs. ([Anglers Journal](#))

Lefty, Chico, Flip, Whitlock, and the list goes on. Here are the fifty most influential fly fishers from 1968 to 2018. That's 50 years. Now, make it 51 and add Andy Mill to the list. There are others, too, for sure. Thanks to all. ([Fly Fisherman](#))

About the Gulf Council. Now that the IGFA is certifying world records for fish that are normally caught in federal waters there's a new motivation for inshore fishers to see what's going on in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Gulf Council is short for the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. It manages fishery resources in federal waters 9 miles out and beyond to help achieve the best harvest year after year while ensuring the health of fish stocks, ecosystems, and habitats. ([Gulf Council](#))

Bill

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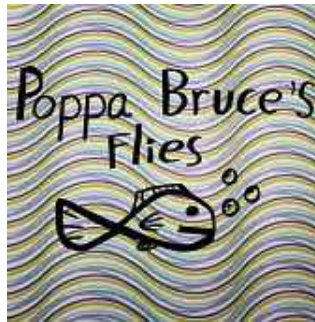


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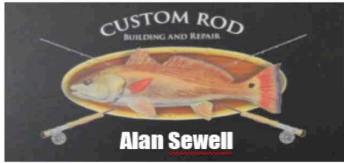


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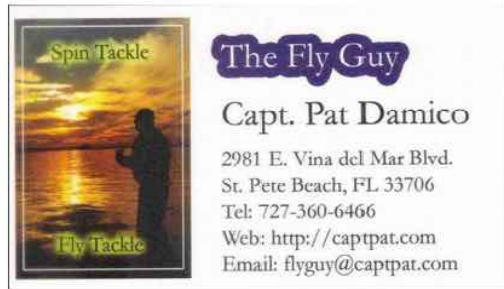
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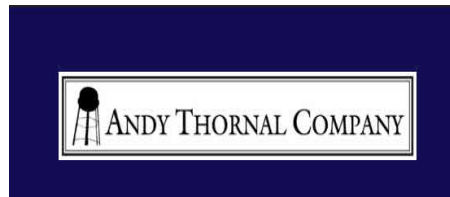
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