

# On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg

Oh, what a beautiful morning P8



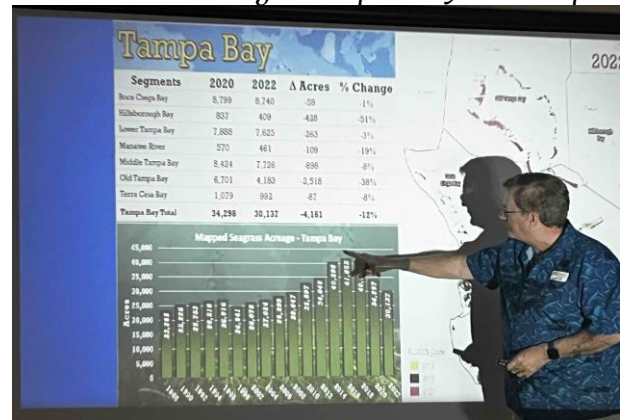
November meeting & fly casting clinic P3



He's shooting for 100 P10-11



October Meeting: Tampa Bay Watch p7



Do-it-yourself articulated hinges P12





## President's Message: November 2023

There are three events this month that I would encourage each of you to participate in.

- Our member meeting, on Thursday November 16<sup>th</sup>, is our annual open house featuring Dayle Mazzarella as our guest speaker.
- Saturday November 18<sup>th</sup> is the casting clinic.
- And Sunday November 19<sup>th</sup>, is the Big Gun Shootout.

The open house is intended to give anyone interested in fly fishing the chance to find out more about Suncoast Fly Fishers. We encourage members to invite friends and family and the club would like to invite anyone in the local area to join us for a fun evening. We will be serving free pizza, there will be a Tail Magazine subscription giveaway and we will hold our regular merchandize raffle where you can win some great prizes.

Dayle Mazzarella is a Master Certified Instructor (MCI). He will entertain you from his lifetime of experiences as a fly fisherman, instructor, and professional guide. The casting clinic is a great chance for you to improve your skills. MCI's Pat Damico and Dayle Mazzarella will be working with a team of qualified instructors to teach all skill levels of fly fishers. I have attended every one of these clinics for more than ten years and I always come away learning something new. The clinic is free to all SFF and FFI members. If you are not an FFI member you can join at the event as your price of admission.

The Big Gun Shootout is a friendly casting competition organized by the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club. There are six events that replicate many real-world fishing situations. Through the Hoop tests your ability to throw tight loops. The "V" Fish represents sight casting to your chosen quarry. There is an Under the Mangrove challenge. The Accuracy competition tests your ability to hit a hula hoop target at various distances with bonus points for hitting a smaller frisbee target within each hoop. The Carl Hanson Cup plays on Carl's contention that anyone should be able to hit a coffee cup at 30'. In reality, this one is pretty much dumb luck. The final test is the distance competition with all competitors that throw at least 100' advancing to the shootout event for longest cast. A perfect score is 600 points. Most elite casters score in the 400's. Really good casters score in the 300's and the rest of us score somewhere below that.

Many competitors are intimidated by distance casting, but it is one of easiest events to score points. There is a common theme here and that is casting. Casting is the essence of fly fishing. It is the one thing that sets fly fisherman apart from all other types of fishing. For me, I enjoy casting as much as I do fishing. I hope all of you will join us at the open house to hear one of the area's best guides and casting instructors. I also hope you come to the casting clinic to learn new skills and participate in the Big Gun Shootout to test your ability or just to watch some of the best casters show their stuff.

This is also the time for all of us to renew our SFF membership and it has never been easier. You can pay by check or with credit card and you can renew on our website [SuncoastFlyFishers.com](https://SuncoastFlyFishers.com) . If you have any questions about your membership, please contact Karen Warfel, ph. 813-505-3162, email [kmwarfel@yahoo.com](mailto:kmwarfel@yahoo.com) . If you know anyone that might be interested in fly fishing, invite them to come to our November open house. I know that our members will make them feel welcome!

Thanks. Stay safe and keep fishing!

*Rick*

Rick Warfel

November 2023

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*On The Fly : Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers*

## Meetings, Outings, and More

### Thursday, November 16 Open House Meeting

**Speaker, Dayle Mazzaella, FFI Master Casting Instructor**

**Walter Fuller Park Recreation Center, 7891 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue N., St. Petersburg**

- Open house and free pizza.
- Bring your friends who might want to join the club.
- Our speaker is member Dayle Mazzaella, FFI Master Casting Instructor. He's flying in from Wyoming and will speak about how he got into fly fishing and made it his career.
- Sign up to attend Saturday's Master Fly Casting Clinic at Egan Field in St. Pete Beach

### November 9-13, Eglades canal expedition

- It's too late for you to join this expedition but several club members hustled down to Clewiston on November 9 to fly fish a canal area that is only open to fish four days a week. It's the A-1 Flow Equalization Water Area 1. It's off of Highway 27, south of Clewiston.
- Bill Scarola and Bruce Evensen organized the trip and led the way.
- They're coming back on November 13 with likely reports of hundreds of Eglade fishes being caught.

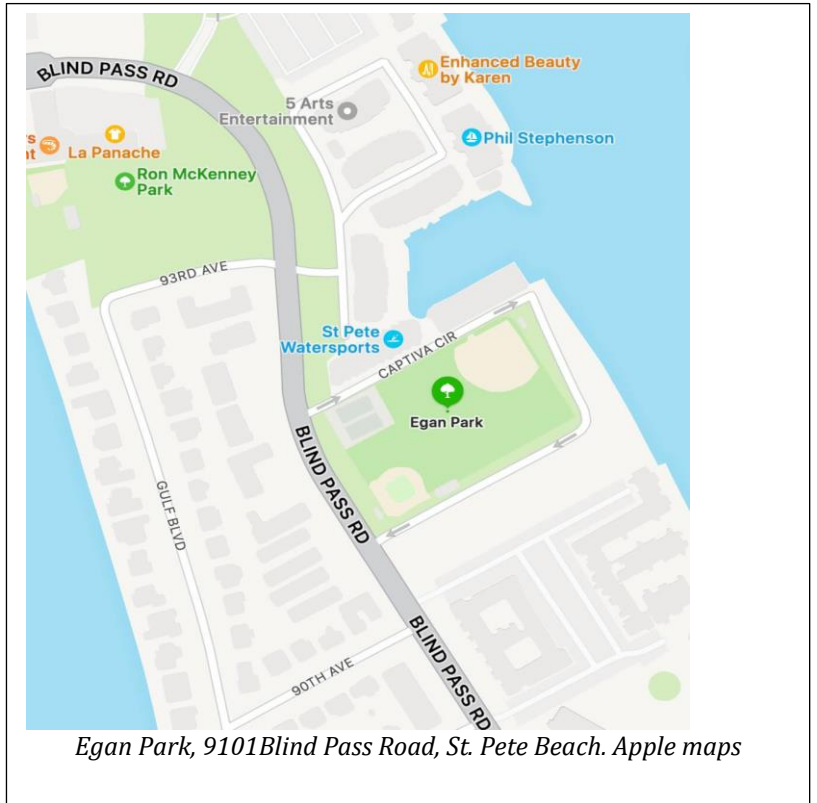
### Saturday, November 18, Master Fly-Casting Clinic

**Egan Park, St. Pete Beach, 8:30 am until 3 pm**

**Free to all members of Fly Fishers International.**

**Co-sponsored by Suncoast Fly Fishers and Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club**

- Instructors: Dayle Mazzaella and Capt. Pat Damico, both FFI Master Casting Instructors, plus Jonas Magnusson, Chris O'Byrne, and Robert DeAngelis -- all Certified Casting Instructors.
- It's free to members of Fly Fishers International (FFI) which includes all members of the Suncoast Fly Fishers. Or you can join FFI for a year for \$35 and it's only \$25 for seniors and vets. WHERE: Egan Park, 9101 Blind Pass Rd, St. Pete Beach, FL 33706.
- Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Come join us for a fun day of friendship and instruction! Members from all clubs are welcome as well as the general public. And, we'll need volunteers to help with breakfast and lunch prep and cleanup.
- Bill Scarola has Dayle's clinic equipment. He's asking if anyone could help store it after the clinic.





## Meetings, Outings, and More

### Sunday, November 19 –Big Gun Shootout

- Picnic Island Park, Tampa, 9 am to 2 pm.
  - This is a biggie, an annual fly casting competition put on by the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club. All are welcome and there is no entry fee.
  - There'll be awards for the highest scoring individual, the highest-scoring team, and the longest cast. (like, you know, 120 feet.) Lunch at Shelter #611.
  - Bring your 8 weight. Individuals and teams of three compete by casting under "mangroves," into a cup of water, through a hoop, and for distance. Come early to help do the set-ups.
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### Wednesday November 29, Hillsborough River

#### Mid-Week Outing, Trout Creek Conservation Park, Thonotosassa

- Since our regular Saturday outing is a fly casting clinic the club has a new on the water outing.
  - Members will meet up at 8 am Wednesday, November 29. at Trout Creek Conservation Park near Thonotosassa.
  - The winner will be the member catching the longest bass. If it's longer than 14.5 inches that bass also wins the annual longest-fish outing contest.
  - Bring your own lunch. The club will supply cold drinks. Meet up with others at noon to share stories.
  - Let outings chair Bob Burkard know if you're coming. He's bringing drinks. His email address is [robertburkard9@gmail.com](mailto:robertburkard9@gmail.com)
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### Friday, December 8. Kayak fishing expedition

- Kayak fishing and lunch at the Florida Youth Conservation Center in Apollo Beach, 66540 Dickman Road.
  - It's a two-fer: Members of the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club will be there, too.
  - Are you going? Then be sure to add your name to the list. Email Pres. Rick Warfel at [rh\\_warfel@yahoo.com](mailto:rh_warfel@yahoo.com)
  - Thanks to Gina Russo for hosting this and the lunch. She's outreach coordinator for MYFWC with offices at the Youth Conservation Center. It's an impressive project. [Check it out.](#)
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### Friday, December 15, "PLUS" Holiday Party, St. Jerome Catholic Church, Largo

- PLUS? That's short for *Pot-Luck-Ugly-Sweater*.
  - There'll be an anonymous gift exchange. Bring one gift. Don't spend more than \$40.
  - Anne and Robert Mitchell have agreed to handle the ugly sweater contest and gift exchange. They've done it before. Volunteers are still needed to set up and decorate the room.
  - Sign up at the November meeting and put down what dish you'll be bringing.
  - David Redd will bring a huge ham. Bring a side --appetizer, veggie, carbo, or dessert.
  - St. Jerome's Church is at 10895 Hamlin Blvd. in Largo
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### Saturday, December 16, Don Coleman Invitational Outing

#### Fort DeSoto Park, Pavilion #4 on North Beach

- De Soto Park, Don Coleman Invitational and chili picnic.
  - Members of Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club and Sarasota's Mangrove Coast Fly Fishers are invited to join us. It's a tradition.
  - Don Coleman was an innovative fly fisher and treasured member of Suncoast Fly Fishers. New members receive a copy of his booklet, "Wading the Saltwater Flats with a Fly Rod."
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## Meetings, Outings, and More

### Get ready to vote for new officers and board members

- Members of the Nominating Committee will be announced at the January meeting
- At the February meeting the nominating Committee will announce its recommendations. Nominations from the floor are also welcomed. Nominations are closed at the end of the February meeting and elections are held in March.
- Rick Warfel (President), and Quin Berry (Vice President) will have served two consecutive two-year terms. They are eligible for other officer positions and/or not on the board. Rick Warfel is also eligible to sit on the board as a non-voting member for one year as a Past President.

### January 18 meeting

- Thursday, January 18, Trash 'n' Treasures meeting.

### January 20 outing

- Weedon Island Preserve (tentative).

### 2024 Hog Roast. Save the dates.

- This is our big fun fund raiser for the year. It's co-hosted with the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club.
- Very tentatively, it's scheduled for April 6 at St. Jerome's Church in Largo but it may be moved to a venue closer to members of the TBFFC.
- Other date being considered is March 16.

### New hats are on the way

- New SFF logo hats in varying colors have been ordered.
- Baseball caps are \$25. Bucket style hats are \$30.
- And soon we'll be able to have the club logo embroidered on our favorite fly fishing shirts. \$15. Bring a clean shirt to the November meeting if you would like it to get an embroidered logo.

### Report: Honeymoon island Fall Festival

- The club attended Honeymoon Island's Fall Festival on October 21 and 22 providing beach goers with fly casting, fly tying and club information. Members who helped out said it was very worthwhile and recommended that we do again next year.

### Report: Carrollwood Village Kids Fishing Club

- Rick Warfel and David Redd gave fly casting demonstrations and helped 10 kids to get to practice casting with a fly rod.
- Rick and David presented the young fly fishers with flies tied for the occasion by by Smitty, Cliff and other members. (Smitty donated 50 Crystal Beetles and the foam to tie them!)

### Report: Thursday, November 2. USF Awards Reception.

- This year the Suncoast Fly Fishers has awarded a \$500 scholarship to Hallie Repeta. She is pursuing her PhD in USF's Marine Resource Assessment program with a career aimed towards fisheries management and marine and coastal conservation to counter the negative effects of population growth and more fishing pressure.

# 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

Welcome new member Tom DeBella of Southland Real Estate. Suncoast Fly Fishers now has 126 members including 18 family members and 6 honorary members. Dues are \$50 (for individuals, \$40 for seniors, and \$60 for families. That 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](http://www.suncoastflyfishers.org)

### Club Officers

Pres: Rick Warfel  
Vice Pres: Quin Berry  
Secretary: David Redd  
Treasurer: Karen Warfel

### Board of Directors

Bill Scarola, Bob Burkard, Bruce Evensen, Ryan Sollars, Cliff Nigh, James Davis, Bill AuCoin

**Casting:** Pat Damico, Dayle Mazzarella

**FFI Liaison:** Pat Damico

**Conservation:** Cliff Nigh

**Fly Tying:** Myron Hansen

**Hog Roast:** Open

**Membership:** Karen Warfel

**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.

## Peter Clark: Tampa Bay Watch Founder and Visionary

*By Bill AuCoin, editor*

I met Peter Clark back in the mid 1990s. He had only recently founded [Tampa Bay Watch](#) and rented office space near my little PR firm in the Snell Isle Plaza. I got to know Peter and applauded his vision to fix the Tampa Bay ecosystem.

Fast forward 25-plus years. Under his leadership, Tampa Bay Watch has installed 10,000 oyster reef units and spread 1,200 tons of oyster shells to create two-plus miles of oyster reef communities. TBW has planted salt marsh grasses to restore 200 acres of coastal tidal ponds. There's much more: seagrass restoration, derelict crab trap removal, stormwater runoff, coastal bird nest cleanups, scallop searches.

It has been a long time since we were office neighbors so I was really pleased when Peter generously agreed to come to a Suncoast Fly Fishers' meeting and update us on TBW's growth and success in the intervening years. TBW has gone from what was essentially a one-man-band to a multi-million dollar non-profit with 60+ employees. It's waterfront structures are on the Pinellas Bayway just before you cross the bridge over Bunces Pass going to Fort DeSoto Park. Nice location? You bet!

So, how is the bay doing? Generally speaking, it is doing very well. In fact, it is doing extraordinarily well since the heavy pollution years of the 50s and 60s. But Peter did put up one slide with discouraging news. It seems that in the last few years seagrass acreage is declining. Old Tampa Bay north of Gandy Boulevard and Hillsborough Bay below downtown Tampa are taking the biggest hits. What happened? Tampa Bay Watch and similarly dedicated organizations are collaboratively drilling down for answers.

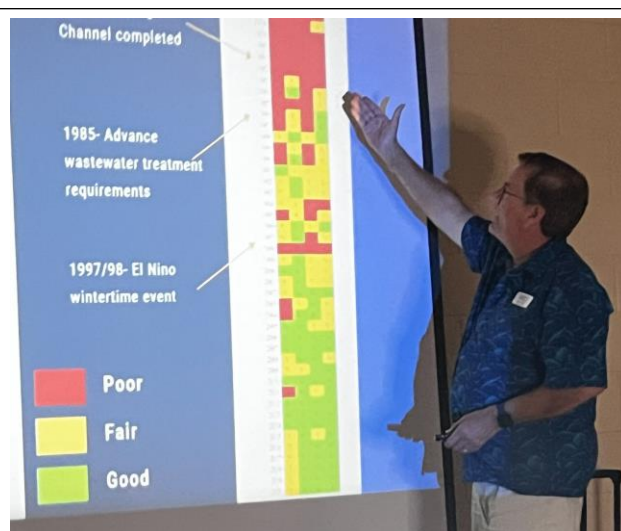
Yes, other organizations have joined the clean-water battle for our bay, But one big difference is that Tampa Bay Watch has created programs to attract citizens to roll up their sleeves and break a sweat. Volunteers make oyster domes, plant shoreline grasses, remove and recycle monofilament fishing line left tangled in the mangroves. Today more than 100,000 volunteers have done the hard work and with their hands-on enthusiasm they have created a citizen-science bulwark to make sure the health of Tampa Bay remains a top political priority. Even more are drawn to the cause at the [TBW Discovery Center](#) on the St. Pete Pier.

Another generation of support is right behind them. Tampa Bay Watch has hosted more than 42,000 students from 150-plus schools on Tampa Bay field trips. And there are summer camps for boys and girls up to age 15.

Thank you, Tampa Bay Watch. Thank you, Peter. We applaud your vision to keep on making the Tampa Bay ecosystem the best it can be.



*Peter Clark, founder and president of Tampa Bay Watch, spoke to Suncoast Fly Fishers at the October meeting.*



*Tampa Bay Watch's Peter Clark points to a chart documenting improvements in the health of Tampa Bay. Better wastewater treatment in 1985 was very important as are oyster shell reefs, shoreline restoration, and other Tampa Bay Watch initiatives.*



## Bob Burkard: Emerson Point Preserve



Bob Burkard, outings committee chair

Fifteen members met up on Saturday, October 21, to fly fish from beautiful Emerson Point Preserve just west of Palmetto in Manatee County.

Nobody caught a snook so we didn't have an outing winner. Nor were any redfish caught. But James Davis caught a 19-inch trout and took the lead in the 2023 Outing Tournament Trail.

That's not to say that we didn't have some tight lines. Rick Warfel caught a little trout at first light. Robert Mitchell caught a 6 -inch trout, several pufferfish, and some pinfish. Mark Hays said he

shouldn't have thrown so many pufferfish away. Apparently they're good eating!

And we had a special guest, Rusty Chinnis, a longtime friend of Bill AuCoin. Rusty co-founded [Sarasota Bay Watch](#) and serves as chairman of [Suncoast Waterkeeper](#).



Oh what a beautiful morning. That's Rick Warfel landing a Manatee River seatrout at first light. Karen lends a hand. And that's me on the left. I caught lots of pinfish. Woohoo.

Bob



Kevin Kelly grilled the burgers and hot dogs. Delicious!



Good turnout. Here are some of the 15 members who fished the Emerson Point Preserve outing. A good time was had by all.

### Leaders on the 2023 Outing Tournament Trail

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	James Davis	21.5"	Docklight/beach outing (June)
Longest redfish	Wes Sobczak	21"	Fort DeSoto Park (August)
Longest ladyfish	David Redd	15.5"	Docklight/beach outing (June)
Longest seatrout	James Davis	19.0"	Emerson Point Preserve (October)



## Bob Burkard: November 29 -- Back to Trout Creek Park

Since our official November "outing" is a fly-casting clinic on November 18, I felt we deserved a fishing outing, too. So I checked with the powers that be and we got the go-ahead to schedule a real fishing outing.

It's the Hillsborough River again; specifically it's the Hillsborough River at Trout Creek Conservation Park.

The address is 12550 Morris Bridge Road, Thonotosassa. There's a \$2 per car fee.

It's Wednesday, November 29. Meet up at 8 am to launch 'yaks and canoes then assemble at noon for lunch. Bring your own lunch. Bob will bring cold drinks.

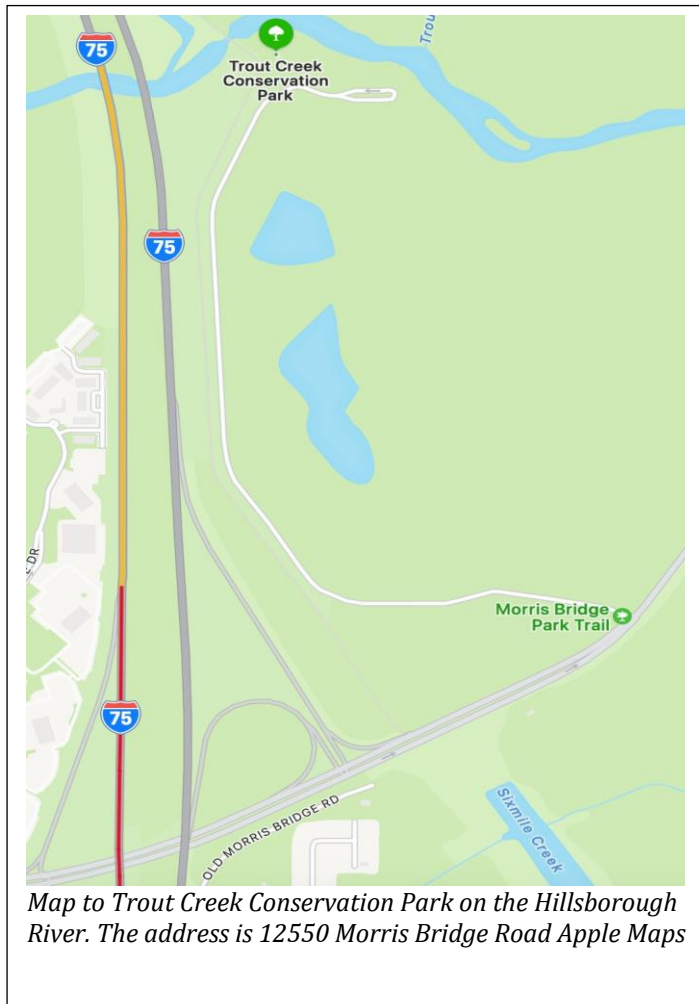
The member catching the longest bass wins the \$10 outing gift certificate. And, if it's longer than 14.5 inches it'll win the 2023 tournament trail competition, too.

I love fishing and kayaking on the Hillsborough River. This local river is a great place to catch bass and bream, and provides a scenic paddle.

Most of our Suncoast Fly Fishers outings take place in "the salt" so our Hillsborough River outing provides an enjoyable change where I can catch fish on my light freshwater fly rods. This year, I am using a 4-wt made by Alan Sewell that my wife Carole won at last year's Suncoast Fly Fishers Christmas party. Luckily for me, she gave it to me.

We'll have a signup sheet at the meeting and you'll also get one on an eblast from Bill AuCoin. Or, you can email me at [robertburkard9@gmail.com](mailto:robertburkard9@gmail.com)

*Bob*



*This is kayak/canoe fishing water. Wade fishing is discouraged.*

## Tim Elms: 100 Silver Dollars, Part One



*Watching more roll. This was #67.*

Howdy! Back in June, I remember casting at Tarpon around a dock light and Billy asking me how many I had landed by then. 42? I said. Yes. I keep track of where, when, how, and how many. (And, no, a leader touch on a 5 pound poon is not a landed poon for me). By the end of the night, it was 43. A perfect night for me. One in hand out of three that jumped and and threw the hook.

**BREAKING NEWS**  
Tim has reached his goal of catching 100 juvenile tarpon this year. Keep reading.

The very next day I thought about how the following months would determine my tarpon chasing plan and what goals I could set. Could I land one with a 2 weight? Wonder if I could feed them a squirmy worm? How small is a small

one? Would catching 100 in one year be doable? Writing this today even makes me shake my head.

Juvenile Tarpon in my book can be broken down into three groups: Nanos, Micros, and Juvis ,and just like the big migrating mommas in the Gulf, they are the top dogs in the water they cruise. Each sub group has its own level of difficulties, but a fly rod is the perfect tool to get them to your hands. I'll share my experience of each group and what has worked for me as I inch closer and closer to my 100 tarpon in one year challenge.

Before I go into more details, remember; no matter the size, a tarpon is a tarpon in every stage of their juvenile or adult life. They breathe air. They do not like to be hooked. They are opportunistic in eating. And last but not least, feeding a fish that doesn't want to eat during the day is the challenge we all face.

### **Nanos—Tiny lil fellas.**

This subgroup took me a long time to find, feed, fight, and land. Some tips on these are: when in doubt go small. Like size 8 or smaller flies, and LIGHT tippet. I find white things seem to be their preferred color to attack with black being a close second. Be absolutely sure you are watching nanos roll.

Numerous flicks in the water in one spot is a great start to witnessing Nanos. I've even witnessed them daisy chain like the big dogs. A curve cast into the school will help not lining them and moving them to a different spot. Keep your eye directly on your fly and watch for the flash of a baby trying to mouth your bug. Chances are, there will be a fish under the flashy one you saw.

If you are unsure if it's a tarpon and not another fish, tie on a gurgler in white of any size and work the area first.

Nanos tend to bump their heads and attack things on the surface more eagerly than others. Do you want to catch them on top? Cut the front legs off a bluegill spider and fish it the way you fish a gurgler. They will pop it if you work it just right. Oh yeah! They will eat a squirmy worm also if they are fired up.



*Nano on a spider*

*-Tim's 100 tarpon in a year challenge continues on next page-*

## P2/Tim Elms: 100 Silver Dollars

### Micros-- Probably my favorite size.

These lil buggers move the scales for me on the fun factor. This size is easier to spot rolling as they show their silver, tails, or even bust out of the water while feeding. This size is also super fun to target with lighter rods. I got my first tarpon on a 5 weight. And now I have a (silly?) goal of catching one on a 2 weight this year. Possibly the hardest part of this size is setting the hook and making it past the first jump. A tarpon that weighs five pounds is hard to penetrate without just pulling it toward you. Some tips on this size are sharpen your hooks, pull hard after a jump when they are upside down, and keep your eye on the prize during the fight. Any slack is the enemy unless the tarpon is back-flipping out of the water. These princes are fun to target in low light, after a rain storm, or just an afternoon session in the hot sun.



#56. Poon on a 2-weight

I set out in the month of August with many micros under my belt and a very good stretch of time was working in my favor of finding them. Moon, day tides, and winds were all setting up nicely for a chance at an octagon fight.

With my shady 2 weight (bought at the trash n treasures auction) finally lined properly with a 2 wt line, I would practice on bass, Mayan cichlids, and bluegills to get a good feel on how hard I can pull on a fish. To be honest the Mayans tested me and the rod the most. My next thought was how can I build a leader that I know will be strong enough to land a tarpon, turn over a decent fly, and work well in some wind. This took lots of trial and error on largemouth bass but I ended up with a 6-lb class and a 16-lb shock tippet. Turning over a fly with a 2-wt line is very difficult so the perfect porridge was required. I knew what fly I would use as it was trusty all week. (Not a Clouser!) Then came the hard part -- learning to cast a 2-wt more than 50 feet and be accurate, too. Yes you can double haul a 2-weight and most likely you will have to. Mine is a 7 foot 6 inch rod so not your typical 10 footer which is much easier than a 7 footer to get going.



Number 64

Let the games begin. I jumped four before I stuck the landing like Mary Lou. I saw my target just three seconds after I got ready. A super quick launch and a tiny strip after it hit the water and P O W and he launched toward the sky. I knew by previous jumpers I had to do things a little more gentler to protect my knots and my tippet. Rod down. Fight with rod butt. Let him work himself tired. I didn't have a net so things got tricky as my hands were trembling but I got him close enough for a mouth grab. I'm not sure what that accomplished more than just seeing if I could do it.

When I wrote this (11/8/23 ) I was at 95 for the year but a few after that I hit the juvenile tarpon jackpot and today (11/13/23) my total is 103. I'll be writing about all this in the December issue. Also, I'll share about some of the big snook I've caught this year. So stay tuned.

*Tim*



## Bill Scarola: Back to the Eglades



*Bill Scarola and a 12-incher*

It was almost a last minute decision but a few of us decided to drive down and fly fish Eglades canal water south of Clewiston on the long weekend of November 11-13. We went to the area what is called the A-1 Flow Equalization Water Area 1 at is only open to fish four days a week. It's off of Highway 27 but north of one of our other favorite areas known as Billy's Bass Hole.

We arrived at Roland Martin Resort and we saw these fish sucking air on the surface! It's a prehistoric looking ugly mother!

*Bill*



*That's Bill's Hypostomus Plecostomus, AKA armored catfish. He caught it from the dock at Roland Martin Resort right after the SFF fly fishers arrived in Clewiston.*



*That's Jack Collins and a 16 inch bass.*



## Cliff Nigh: Do-It-Yourself Articulated Fly Spines...for Pennies



I like articulated flies. I especially like game changers! I mean, I like the way they look, I like tying them, and I like fishing them.

What I don't like is buying fish spines, or shanks to tie those flies. Those things aren't cheap and when you're tying a larger fly that may take five spines in different sizes, it's easy to ring up a respectable tab. The last one we tied in our shop fly class took five spines per fly.

We had 16 tiers. Do the math when a pack of 16 to 25 costs about \$7 to \$9, or more, depending on where you buy them. Yeah, you can probably get them cheaper from China, but I have this thing about supporting American companies when I can, even if they're selling some off-shore products.

Now, despite what you may have heard, I am NOT cheap. Frugal sounds so much better and lends an air of dignity to being cheap. For a very small investment, you can make your own spines, or shanks, for pennies each!



*Looper tool used for making fish spines.*

Following through on my frugality, I purchased a 1 - Step Looper tool on Amazon for \$25.00. I had some 1/32" stainless wire sitting around my work shop and it was perfect for what I had in mind. I invested about 5 mins browsing around YouTube until I found a 5 minute tutorial on how to use this tool for making spines. Invested \$25 and 10 minutes of time.

I practiced making them for about another 10 minutes. It's a "stupid simple" process. Hey, if Mr. Frugal can do it, anyone can. No fooling, in 10 minutes I was making spines that I was very pleased with (in addition to being frugal, I'm also very picky about what I tie with). So, another 10 minutes invested for a total of 20 minutes.

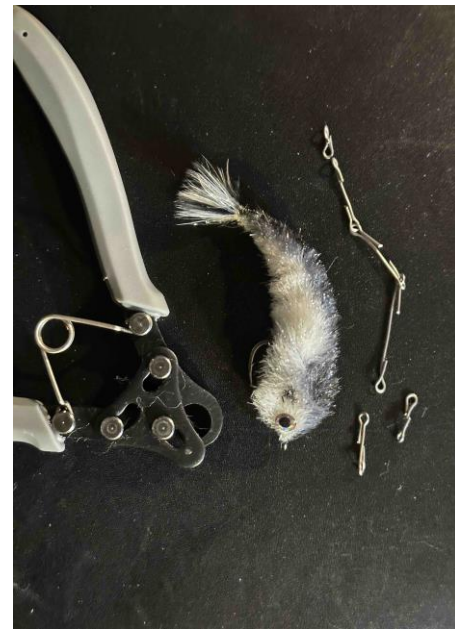
Now, time to get down to business. I had 15 people in class plus me. Five spines per fly. That was a total of 75 spines in various sizes. In less time than it took to listen to a full Chris Stapleton album, I had 75 spines and a few extras, in the sizes and quantities I needed for class.

I figure that for the fly we were tying, and for the various size spines and quantities needed, it would have cost about \$50 to supply spines to everyone. Instead, it cost \$25 and some time. I still have the tool and can make as many spines as I want, any time I want in any size I want.

The real benefit though is that sense of accomplishment that comes from doing something yourself rather than paying someone to do it for you. I mean, that's why you tie flies anyway, right? The tutorial on YouTube is so good, that I'm just passing on some general pics of homemade spines, the tool used and the fly tied with them.

Just do a YouTube search for "using a 1 Step Looper tool for fish spines" as the process is a little different than the product instructions show. This is, after all, a jewelry making tool and not a fly tying tool.

Now, go make some spines!



*Cliff*

## Flies that work in the Eglade Canals with Bruce Evensen & Bill Scarola



*Bruce*



*Here are several different patterns that work in the glades areas. They include crappie jigs, mop flies, spiders, baitfish even wooly buggers. All colors work. Most are on size 10 hooks but you can size up to #4.*



*Bill*

Bruce and Bill went down to Clewiston with some other members to fish the A-1 flow equalization basin off of Highway 27. They're coming back on Monday, November 13, but they'll not be a fly tying session at Bruce's studio that day. Bill sent the picture of the best flies and a list of materials.

### **Materials: Freshwater bait fish**

Hooks: fresh water streamer sizes 6, 8, 10, & or 12. Also dry fly hooks, same sizes.

Fish body: Bottoms extra select craft fur, colors: white, tan, yellow, etc. Other materials also work. Congo hair or doll hair, for example.

Fish body: Top colors -- olive, chartreuse, brown grey, white.

Flash: Crystal flash, pearl, or others.

Lead wraps: optional.

Eyes: Small stick-on eyes,, or use a marker

Marker colors: Red, black, green. as needed

Glue: Eye glue and U V epoxy

### **Materials: Mop fly:** All colors.

### **Materials: Spiders:**

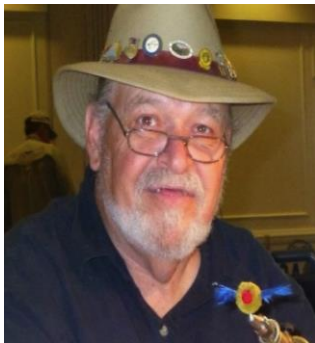
1/8-inch foam. White, black, brown

Sily legs: white, black and/or striped

Estaz: Any color. Favorites are chartreuse and bright yellow.

Spiders also need marabou tails in different colors. as shown, such as white, orange, chartreuse.

## Double Barrel Frog Fly



Layne "Smitty" Smith

*This is big bass candy and just right for the longest-bass outing on the Hillsborough River on Wednesday, November 29. This simple popper pattern really attracts hungry bass!*

*Smitty*



### Materials:

Hook: Mustad 33903 Classic Sproat Extra Long Shank Hook with Kink

Thread: Danville Flatwaxed Nylon Fluorescent Green

Head: Chartreuse Surface Seducer Double Barrel Popper, Medium \* **SEE NOTE BELOW**

Eyes: Surface Seducer 4mm eyes, green. See note below.

Tail: Fluorescent green marabou Flash: Mix of holographic green and pearl Flashabou

Collar: Fluorescent green grizzly neck or saddle hackle

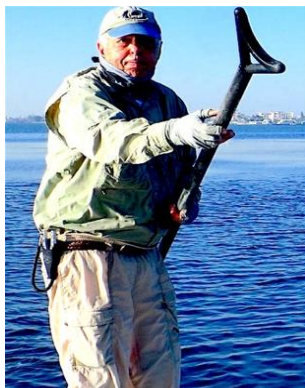
Finish: Solarez UV Resin Cement: Your favorite CA Cement

### NOTE:

Use heated bodkin to pierce from center back of head to just above lower lip at front for proper hook placement.

### Tying Sequence:

1. Prep popper head by painting in spotted frog pattern (I use black nail polish). When dry, add 4mm eyes and then overcoat everything with Solarez UV Resin. Cure and set aside
2. Place hook in vise then lay a thread base down in touching wraps to hook point then repeat touching wraps back to hook eye then back to hook point.
3. Apply a coat of CA Cement to thread wraps to just past kink then slide head on until it just clears the hook eye. Let dry for a minute or two.
4. Advance thread to popper head then tie in marabou tail as full as you like.
5. Tie in both green and pearl Flashabou to extend back on both sides of marabou. Trim slightly longer than marabou.
6. Tie in grizzly hackle and palmer 4 or 5 times to end tight up next to the popper head. Whip finish, trim thread and excess hackle. Add a drop of CA Cement and let dry.



## Capt. Pat Damico: Captain's Corner

### Low tides can be fantastic

How many times have you had a good fish on only to have the line go limp and the leader return to you without the fly or part of the leader also missing? If you had the fish hit or tangle around an obstruction like barnacle-encrusted pilings or bridge abutments this is understandable. I encourage clients to bring their own gear so that I can see how they are rigged. I check how the leader is attached to the fly line, their knots connecting each section of the leader and how the fly is tied on. Leader to the line could be a nail knot, or loop to loop, with a perfection or double surgeon's knot on the butt section of the leader. Leader to leader can be a blood knot, double or triple surgeon's knot. Since we use straight eye hooks for most saltwater flies, a good loop knot should connect the tippet to the fly. If a simple overhand, or "wind," knot is present anywhere in the leader it tells me that they have casting issues that are causing tailing loops, weakening the leader 50%. Do an internet search for each of these knots and practice them with good lighting and old fly line or leader of different colors. Knots usually fail from slipping. Avoid this by having a tube of lip balm in your shirt pocket to lubricate the knot as you pull it tight for complete closure. Saliva is even closer.

*Captain Pat*

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



*Jonas Magnusson, Fly Fishers International Certified fly-Casting Instructor*

## Jonas Magnusson: Fly Casting from a kayak

Casting a fly from a sitting position is vastly different. The seat is lower, making long carries problematic. Longer rods will get more height but as they get longer they become more difficult to use. And it's harder to net a fish, too.

You want a weight-forward line. It could become advantageous to use a short head or overline the rod to better load the rod with the limited carry.

The casting is going to have to be "just" arm movements. So, practice that type of cast from a chair ... a kayak seat or a low beach style chair. Even a regular chair gives you a false sense of space between your casts and the water and how cramped the elbows are going to be! Also, hauling is much more difficult when in a kayak or belly boat.

The problem of the water surface proximity will logically be solved by high back casts paying attention to sending the line over the rod tip. Minimal false casting plus the high back casts will lessen the chances of a line slap behind you.

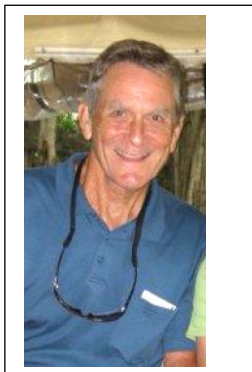
Read more about this on my blog...

[everyjonahasawhale.com/fly-casting/casting-technique/fly-casting-from-a-kayak/](http://everyjonahasawhale.com/fly-casting/casting-technique/fly-casting-from-a-kayak/)

*Jonas*



## Bill AuCoin: Flyfisher Flyover



**Longest bass, anyone?** The November 29 outing on the Hillsborough River gives members one more kick at the cat, so to speak. You can win the longest bass gift certificate for catching the longest bass at the outing and for the year. The current leader is Mark Hays who caught a 14.5 inch bass at the Hillsborough River outing in April. Here are some flies to bring. ([Field & Stream](#))

**Possible outing location?** Lake Fellsmere beats Orange Lake for the "Battle of the Lakes" with the heaviest total bass catches. Take a look at the 9-pound lunger that won the TrophyCatch award this year ([MyFWC](#))

**Does the name Manabu Kurita ring a bell?** If not, how about George Perry? Yeah the subject is huge largemouth bass. I'm pretty sure they're all Florida strain bass. I also think I know they all were caught in the temperate zone. OK, but did they catch them on the fly? *Snark*. ([Game and Fish Magazine](#))--

**You do double-haul, right?** How about catching the drift? Well, the Big Gun Shootout is just a few days away. Get ready to get. ([Field & Stream](#))

**Fact check true:** Usually, accuracy is more important than distance.. Joan Wulff had some thoughts on that topic. Oh, did I mention that the Big Gun Shootout is November 19 ([Midcurrent](#))

**Next up, saltwater.** And the news is not good. After years and years of improving water quality and more sea grass, Tampa Bay is in an unhealthy decline. But why? Piney Point discharge? Fertilizer runoff? ([WUSF](#))

**Or, is bay water too hot?** There's a new research project that should shed light (not sunlight) on this issue. ([St. Pete Times](#))

**2023 fly reel test --** This was a pretty comprehensive project. They tested 49 different reels and selected 17 top performers. There are lots of winners but in different categories like drag, saltwater protection, good looks, and even the sounds they make. ([Yellowstone Angler](#))

**Grab old mono from those mangroves.** -- International coastal Cleanup was/is October 7-November 18. That includes pulling out old monofilament line from the mangroves. Wade fishers see that all the time. There's lots of trash on the beaches as well. ([Keep Pinellas Beautiful](#))

**How to catch a redfish on the "lawn"** -- Actually, this is what fishing for reds in Georgia's low-country looks like sometimes. The guide told Jimmy Jacobs, "The key to this action is getting back into that grass." Take a look. ([On The Fly South](#))

**ICYMI --** I just happened on this link again and I have to say I really love these pictures. You will, too, I'm predicting. ([Rivermen Rod and Gun Club](#))

**Order one of these rods for your granddaughter for Christmas.** There's an interesting fishing story out of Baton Rouge that caught my attention. ([Anonymous](#))



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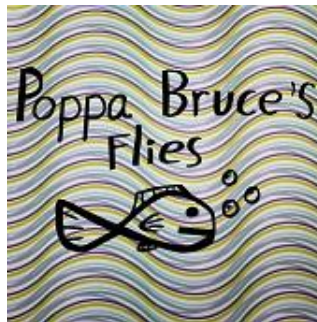
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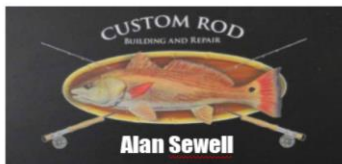


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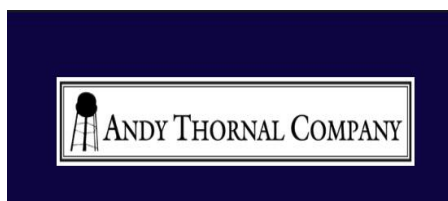
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