

On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg

Ready. Aim. Fire. P7



First fish on the fly P14



Be there: How to catch the inshore slam P4



Fly Fishing. Fostering P17-18



August 23: Will you fish the beach, bay, or bayou? P9



Safety Harbor's Phillippe Park in July P6



Tie flies; win flowers P8



President's Message: August 2025



SFF President David Redd

The Summer BBQ Outing!

Our August outing has become one of the great traditions Suncoast Fly Fishers offers. A wonderful time to meet with friends, tell some stories, reminisce of years past and remember some of those who are no longer with us, and maybe do a little fishing as well.

The participation at the Summer BBQ outing is always strong, and for good reason. Rick Warfel and Bob Burkard have mastered their techniques for smoking beef brisket. This year I will be bringing some pulled pork, I hope it is worthy to be placed next to the blue ribbon briskets. Of course we will have a variety of sides to accompany the meat, and maybe a dessert or two.

Now that all of our mouths are watering, I'll say that the one thing I hope to have at the outing this month above all else is you! For without that key ingredient, the Summer BBQ will be lacking the perfect element. Now I know it is going to be hot, it's August in Florida, so I ordered a nice breeze. Let's see if it arrives on time.

Whether you are a long time member, the newest member or somewhere in between; and even if you don't plan on fishing, I hope you will come and join us for the fellowship and the food and add that secret ingredient that helps make Suncoast Fly Fishers the best fly club in Florida. See you there.

David

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. Welcome new members Larry Cohen, Carol Hanks, Connie Hardy, Sean Pascoli and Barry Tosdevine.

Our club now has 110 members including 15 family and six honorary. Annual membership is \$50 (\$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.

Paying dues: Dues can also be paid via cash, check or credit card

at any club meeting, outing or event. Annual memberships can be paid online through the website --

SuncoastFlyFishers.com -- or by mailing a check to SFF, PO Box 40821, St. Petersburg, FL 33743. You can also pay by credit card by calling Karen Warfel at 813-505-3162.

Suncoast Fly Fishers

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

Club Officers

Pres: David Redd
Vice Pres: Jack Collins
Secretary: Tony Piazza
Treasurer: Karen Warfel

Board of Directors

Quin Berry, Bill Scarola, Bob Burkard, Bruce Evensen, 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, Anne Mitchell, John Moder

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

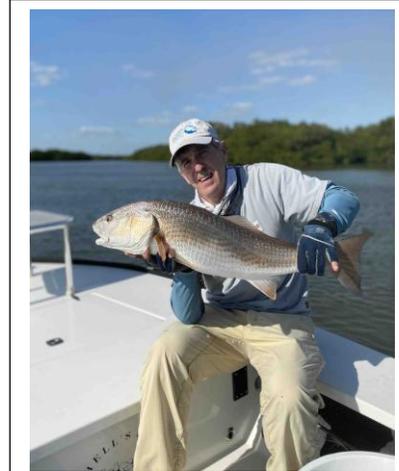
Editor Bill AuCoin, Anne Mitchell, Bob Hood, Tim Elms, Marshall Craig, Kevin Kelly

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.

Meetings, Outings, and More

Thursday, August 21 Meeting, Walter Fuller Park Rec Center

- Leigh West of the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club (TBFFC) will talk about the best spots and fly fishing techniques to catch inshore gamefish in the Gulf-Bay-Bayou-waters of Southwest Florida, especially the waters in and around Fort De Soto Park.
- The meeting starts at 7 pm but come earlier for cookies, coffee, cokes, and co-horting.
- Plus, if you want to work on your fly casting skills, you can load up your rod and shoot your fly toward hula hoop targets positioned on the grass behind the rec center.



Leigh West, our August meeting speaker

Saturday, August 23 Outing and Brisket Picnic, Fort DeSoto Park

- Fly fish the waters all around Fort DeSoto Park. The member catching the longest snook wins a gift certificate. Be sure to take a picture and measure your longest fish.
- Meet up by noon at pavilion #3 on North Beach for our traditional brisket and pulled pork picnic lunch. President David Redd, outing chair Bob Burkard, and member Rick Warfel will be doing the all-night grilling. Alan Sewell is making his award-winning corn bread.
- The outing will also include a Lady Fly tournament casting event near the pavilion.

More 2025 meetings and outings

- September 18 Meeting. Speakers are FFI Certified Fly Caster Jonas Magnusson and SFF member Cliff Nigh of St. Petersburg Fishing Outfitters. Cliff will update us on the latest fly fishing gear coming in 2026.
- September 20 Outing: Fish Tampa Bay on either side of the Sunshine Skyway. Picnic at noon at the North Skyway Rest Area (aka Blackthorn Memorial). This will be our annual get-together with Sarasota's Mangrove Coast Fly Fishing Club. Award for the longest speckled trout.
- October 16 Meeting. Our speaker is Tarpon Hunter Jeff Harrell, founder of BarFly restaurant in Safety Harbor.
- October 18 Outing: This is the 2025 Carl Hanson Memorial on the Hillsborough River with the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club. Fish the upper Hillsborough River then meet up at noon for a picnic at Trout Creek Wilderness Park. Awards for the longest fish of any species and the most panfish.
- November 20 Meeting. (Tentative) Fly Market --Bring and sell the gear you no longer use.
- November 22 Outing: Middle Tampa Bay. Lunch at the Crab Shack on Gandy Boulevard.
- December 18. No meeting
- December 20 Outing: Fort De Soto Park. Annual Outstanding Member Tribute outing. Chili cookoff at Shelter #3 on North Beach. Award for the longest fish caught on the fly.

Continued on next page...

Meetings, Outings, and More

More Events. Save the dates.

- Suncoast Lady Fly Tournament. Captain's meeting Friday, September 12; Tournament Saturday, September 13.
- The Big Gun Shootout at Picnic Island in Tampa will be November 16.
- SFF and TBFFC Christmas Party. Saturday, December 13, 2025, , St. Jerome Catholic Church in Largo.
- Hog Roast. Saturday, March 28, 2026. St. Jerome Catholic Church in Largo.

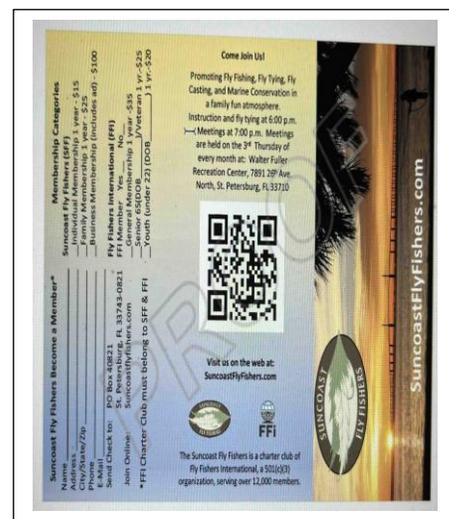
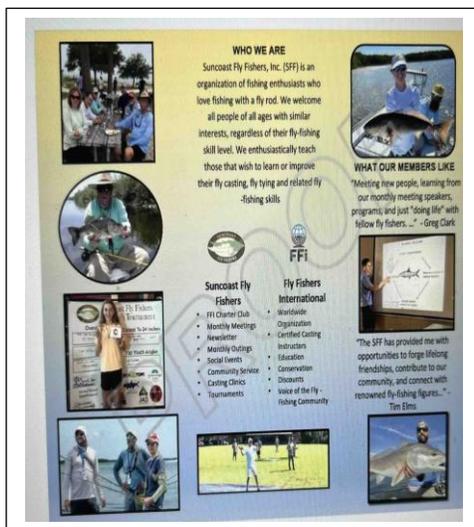
Suncoast Lady Fly Tournament

- Our club's Lady Fly tournament in September has a new logo. The SFF Board of Directors discussed it during the early August Zoom meeting and all the directors really liked it.
- Director Samantha Tallyn reports she's getting sign-ups by competitors and more sponsors. For more information [go here](#). To register to fish the tournament go [here](#).
- Samantha needs volunteers for various event tasks such as setting up the captains dinner and awards dinner. She also needs volunteers to tie flies for the raffles or for prizes. Please help. Phone her at 727-710-3207 or email her at Samantha@janssen-cpa.com.
- St. Petersburg Fishing Outfitters is donating \$1,500 in gift certificates. Thank you, Cliff Nigh!
- Samantha reports that Fly Fishers International's "Women Connect" division is offering Lady Fly \$500 to cover a youth team. More on this later.



New Club Flyer

- Member Jack Collins has written and designed a new club-promotion flyer that members can give to friends who might be interested in joining our club.
- He'll be bringing some to the August meeting.



New Club Wall Poster

- Member Bill Scarola has designed a new club poster for wall display at tackle stores. He's making final adjustments including addition of a QR code.

###

Bob Burkard: Our July Outing Report



Bob Burkard,
meetings-outings
committee chair

I was off on vacation so I missed the July outing. I understand from stand-in Bill AuCoin that our fishes were not very hungry but members seemed to enjoy the Publix' fried chicken and other goodies. And we had a good turnout, 20-plus.

This was a salty water and a fresh water outing. Members fished upper Tampa Bay and/or Alligator Lake in Safety Harbor and Alligator Creek in Clearwater. And we have salty and freshwater \$10 gift certificate



Woody's award winning bluegill

winners. Woody Miller caught the most bluegill. Actually, it was only one bluegill, but one beats zero. It was a good looking bluegill, 8-inches long.

John French didn't want to brag about it but he caught lots of ladyfish up to 14-inches.

This was John's report: "I brought a friend and



Myron Hansen on
Alligator Lake



New member Barry Tosdevine fishing Phillippe Park flats.

potential new member. We fished the East side of pavilion 7, traveled South around the bend, and found a pocket of ladyfish. Using and EP fiber minnow (charcoal and white). I reeled in eight ladyfish from 10 to 14 inches. I switched to a Clouser (chartreuse and white) and picked up an 8" trout. It was a great day. The chicken and sides hit the spot. I enjoyed the location."

Bill told me he and new member Barry Tosdevine spent time fishing the pond at Cooper's Bayou Park, the Alligator Lake spillway, and the Phillippe Park mangrove shoreline. Both had some bites, but no hook-ups.

Leaders on the 2025 Outing Tournament Trail

Species	Winner	Length	Outing (Month)
Longest bream	Tim Elms	9-inches	Fresh and/or Salt (June)
Longest black bass	Bruce Evensen/Tim Elms	22-inches	Everglades (April)
Longest Peacock Bass	Tim Elms	18-inches	Everglades (April)
Longest redfish	Robert Mitchell	28-inches	Fresh and/or Salt (June)
Longest snook	Mark Hays	30-inches	Fresh and/or Salt (June)
Longest seatrout	Mike Nolan	20-inches	Lower Tampa Bay (May)
Longest ladyfish	Tony Piazza	18.5-inches	Weedon Island (January)

Capt. Russ Shirley: Professor at Fly Fishing University

By Bill AuCoin



Captain Russ of Salty Fly Charters was our July meeting speaker. He shared the wisdom he has accumulated in more than 30 years of helping anglers catch big tarpon, snook, redfish, and seatrout in the Tampa Bay area. For more information and lots of inspiring tarpon-snook-redfish pictures go to Captainruss.com

Capt. Russ Shirley's life evolved and still revolves around inshore gamefish. He lived on the water growing up and at night with his bedroom window open he would hear the noisy explosions of snook and tarpon crashing into schools of mullet. He said sometimes it was so loud he couldn't sleep.

So, yes, one thing led to another and for 30 years or so he has been guiding and helping Tampa Bay fly fishers check off catching the big four: Tarpon, Snook, Redfish, and Spotted Seatrout. Recently, Russ founded "F.U. Guys University" and he is the designated Professor of Fly Fishing. And if we really want to catch more grand slammers we fly fishers need to get a degree from F.U.G.U. At our July meeting Professor Russ gave us our assignment for this semester:

Learn to cast please. Hammer The Nail. Handle The Loop. Learn to double haul. You'll double your chances.

The #1 Rule is Do. Not. Hook. The. Guide. The #2 rule is wear good polarized sunglasses so YOU can see the fish out there. If you can't see the fish, you can't catch the fish.

Don't step on the fly line. Don't let your fly line drift back in the water or it might find the propeller.

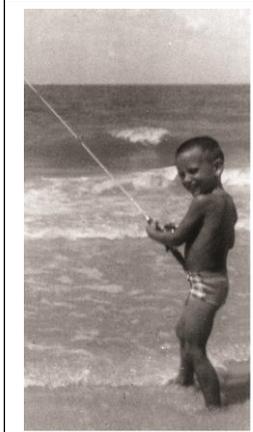
Time is not on your side. Learn the quick-cast. Ready. Set. Go. Fish aren't always in front of the boat so learn to quickly cast in any direction. And don't be a "casturbater,"

and flop your rod back and forth. You're spooking fish, you know.

Fly placement is critical. Stop throwing at tails. Don't lift the rod when you get a strike. Strip the line. Hard.

Making the best use of your time increases your chances of success. That's why you need to arrive on time and have your gear organized and be ready to get up on the bow platform and make some casts. You might get your best shot in the first few minutes of the your trip.

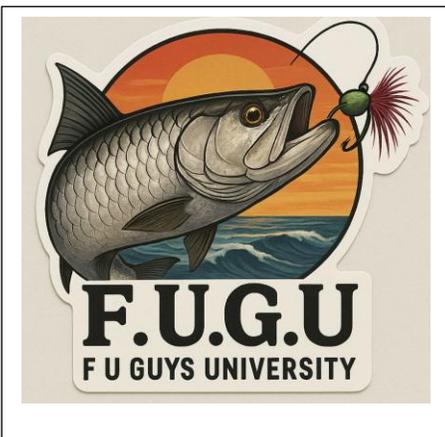
###



Yeah, Captain Russ got an early start. He was 4 years old in this picture.



Waves and wakes rock the boat. Russ recommends we do this balance exercise every day.



Samantha Tallyn: Fishing. Flowers. Flies. Fotos.

Suncoast Lady Fly Tournament, September 13

Tournament Director Samantha Tallyn reports she's receiving lots of registrations by competitors and more sponsors for the second annual Suncoast Lady Fly Tournament. For more information [go here](#). To register to fish the tournament go [here](#).

St. Petersburg Fishing Outfitters is donating \$1,500 in gift certificates. Thank you, Cliff Nigh! Samantha also reported that Fly Fishers International's "Women Connect" division is offering Lady Fly \$500 to cover a youth team.

Samantha needs volunteers for various event tasks such as setting up the captains dinner and awards dinner. She also needs volunteers to tie flies for the raffles or for prizes. Call her at 727-710-3207 or email her at Samantha@janssen-cpa.com.



Tying flies for the raffle and awards for the 2025 Suncoast Lady Fly tournament.



After tying flies, participants in FFI's Women Connect event got to take home some bouquets.

Fly Fishing FFI Women Connect *Flowers 'n' Flies*

FFI Women Connect had a free fly tying workshop last Thursday at the House of Petals in Safety Harbor. Participants got to make and take home a flower bouquet. Even though the weather was bad, everyone had a great time including some first timers!

FFI Women Connect Photo Contest



FFIWC PHOTO
CONTEST

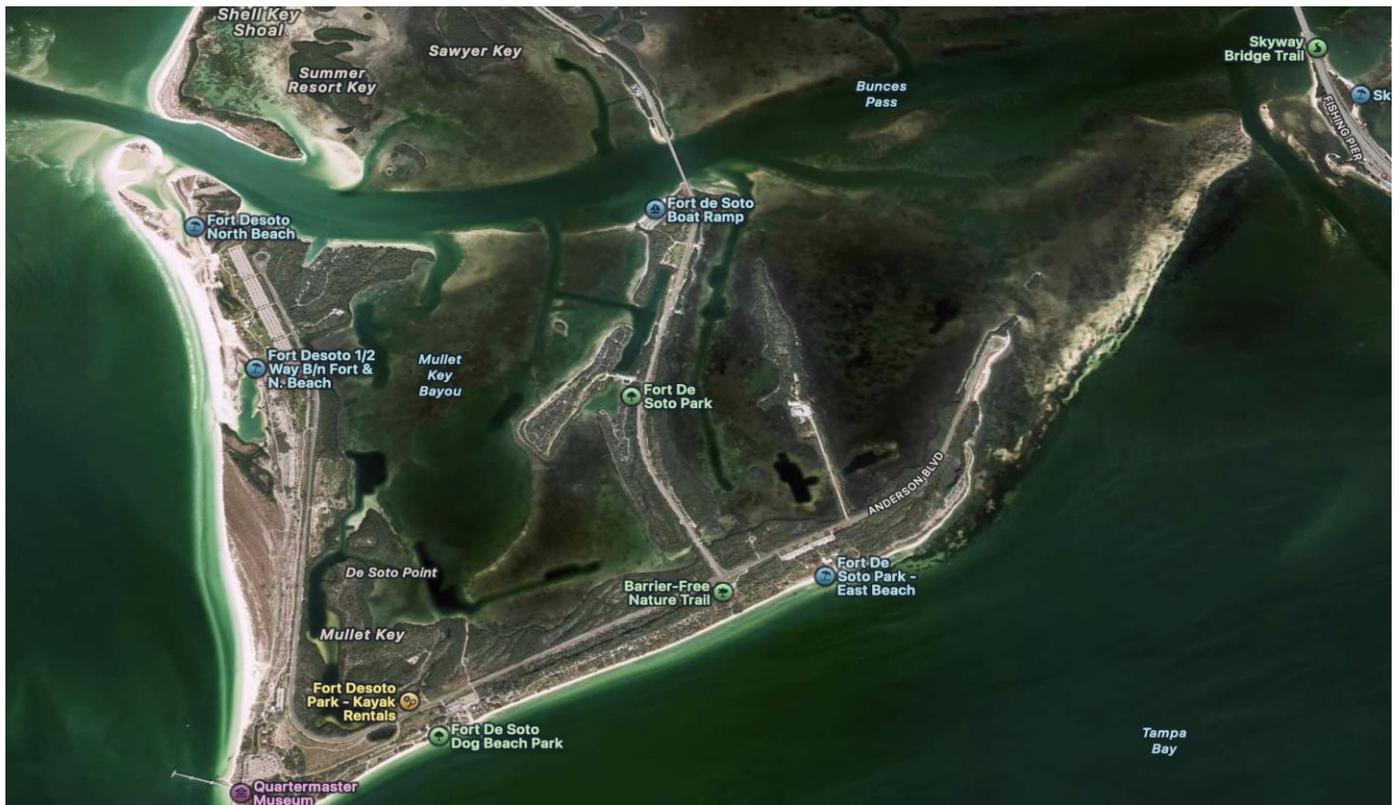
Criteria Photo Contest :

1. Female anglers
2. **Keep Fish Wet**
3. Great Pictures

ENTER YOUR PHOTO FOR A CHANCE TO WIN MISS MAYFLY PRODUCTS

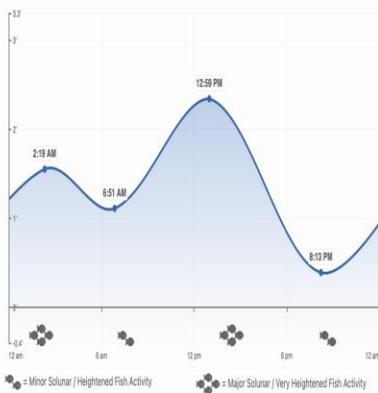
Submit Your Photos at
flyfishersinternational.org

Bob Burkard: August 23 Outing at Fort DeSoto Park



Fort De Soto Park at the mouth of Tampa Bay is one of my favorite places to fish. The park opens at 7 am but if you want an earlier start you can park in the boat ramp area and wade or kayak fish Mullet Key Bayou or Bunces Pass. Notice the deep holes puncturing interior seagrass areas? They were created by bombs dropped for practice by World War II pilots. We meet up at noon at Pavilion #3 along North Beach for our pulled pork and brisket and cornbread picnic. (Apple Maps)

Tides



We'll have a nice incoming tide. [TidesPro.com](https://www.tidespro.com)

Fort De Soto Park holds lots of inshore gamefish: the big three -- snook, redfish, seatrout -- plus a lot more like ladyfish, jack crevalle, pompano and, yeah, probably, catfish. (Remember: the tug is the drug).

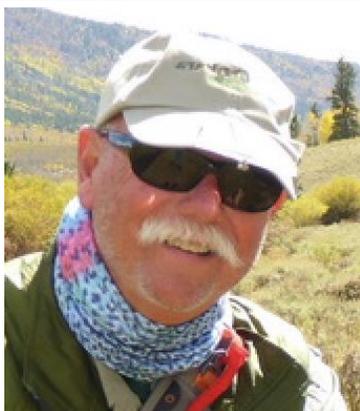
The member catching the longest snook wins the \$10 gift certificate. Also, if you catch a fish measured longer than the previous entries in the outing tournament contest be sure to get a picture and share your story at the picnic.

There are lots of places to wade fish and places to slide your 'yak into the water. Plus, there's a boat ramp on the south side of Bunces Pass bridge.

Samantha Tallyn, who manages the Suncoast Lady Fly tournament, has arranged for a fly casting event next to the pavilion, at the August 23 outing at Fort De Soto Park.

Bob

Woody Miller: The History of Alligator Lake



Woody Miller grew up playing on the creek that later fed Alligator Lake.

You may wonder how I came to know all of this, it's because I grew up playing on the creek coming from Abby Lake where it ran through my childhood property.

How did Alligator Creek become the source of Alligator Lake you might ask? In the late 40's a dam was built at the mouth of the creek where it entered into the bay. Game fish such as Bass and Bluegill were introduced into the lake and they grew to sizable fish. In the late 50's due to heavy rains, the dam was breached and thousands of fish were killed. With the help of the then police chief Claude Rigsby and a number of citizens, they captured what fish they could and placed back into the lake once the breach was closed, many fish were also relocated to other surrounding lakes like Lake Tarpon and Lake Seminole.

Today the lake still produces some sizable catches of Bass and Bream and is one of my favorite lakes to fly fish.

One of our longtime members Terry Kirkpatrick wrote about this lake on his website (<http://fishtested.com/index.html>) it's a great read.

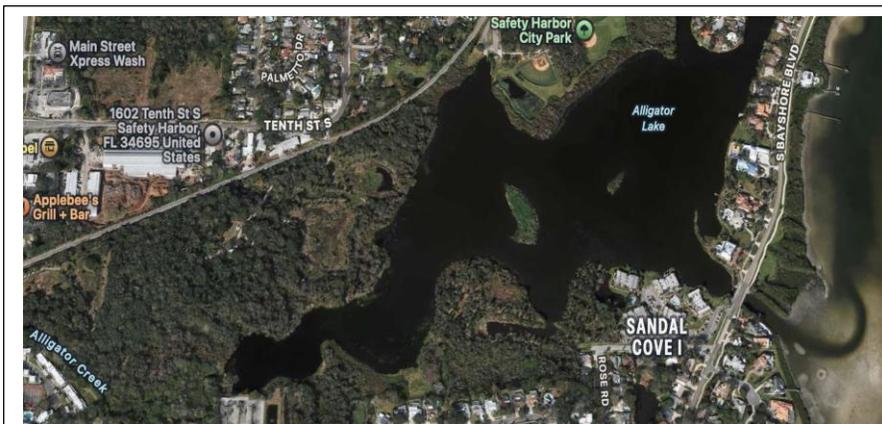
Here is a link to a map of the lake with the water depths (<https://usa.fisherman.org/depth-map/alligator-lake-pinellas-fl/>)

Hope to see you out there.

Woody

Alligator Lake wasn't always a lake. Prior to the mid 1940's the lake was just saltwater marsh connected to upper Tampa Bay. The source of freshwater came from two different areas, Alligator Creek which had its origin at the lakes of Cliff Stephens Park.

The other source was Abby Lake which sits adjacent to Sylvan Abbey Memorial Park. This lake followed a creek which was put into underground pipes in the early 60's when Sunset Point Road was rebuilt. It empties into Alligator Creek behind the Publix shopping center by the railroad tracks on McMullen-Booth Road.



Alligator Lake was our freshwater fly fishing location for the June outing (Apple Maps)



Terry Kirkpatrick spent years fly fishing Alligator Lake and Alligator Creek. He shared some of his insights at the July meeting.

Mark Hays: Fishing the June Outing. No Sweat.



Keeping with tradition, and also an aversion to the brutal summer heat, my son-in-law Robert and I decided to fish Friday night. And what a night it was!

When we hooked up the trailer at 3:00 pm the temperature was 93 degrees. At 5:00 pm the rain and lightning started. I went to bed at 7:00 pm hoping for a break later. At 1:00 am the rain had stopped and Robert and I launched the skiff. The air temperature was now 73.

Without exaggeration this was the most productive night I have ever experienced and I have been doing this for 25 years. Robert must be good luck!

We caught fish from the first cast until the last. Most of the fish were spotted seatrout with many over 16-inches. Yes, we did

keep some for dinner. (I'll add my trout recipe later.)

I managed to land a 30-inch snook around 2:00 am. About 3:00 am Robert hooked a very large redfish, about 30". Unfortunately the 20 lb. leader was no match for the red (and a piling). Later, Robert lost another fly and was ready to head home until he spotted another large red.

I handed him my 9 weight rod with a 30 lb. leader and after a great fight Robert landed and released a 28-inch red.

All three of the largest fish were hooked on a #1 bulkhead deceiver. If you are interested in the fly, check out Gunner Bramer's tying videos on deer hair. This is the same fly I have used around dock lights for the past two years. Tarpon also love this fly but last year it cost me a new 9 weight fly line.



Mark's Seatrout Recipe

- Coat fillets in ranch dressing and dredge in Italian bread crumbs.
- Line a cookie sheet pan with foil (for easier clean up) and place a cookie cooling rack on the foil. This allows the bottom of the fish to cook and not get soggy.
- Bake for 18-25 minutes at 375 degrees, depending on thickness of the fish.
- If you want to get fancy, place two frozen onion rings on each piece of fish.

TOTAL CATCH

32 Trout, largest 19 ½" - Mark
Mark: One 30" Snook
Mark: One Ladyfish 19"
Robert: Two Redfish, largest 28"

Mark

Bob Burkard: Travel Trailer Trout Tripping



My wife Carole, our two dogs, and I spent five weeks vacationing up the east coast from Florida to Maine in our travel trailer. While most of our vacation activities were spent visiting family and friends, in Pennsylvania and Maine, we started our travel with a week at Blue Ridge, Georgia in a great campground that borders the lower Toccoa River. I have stayed in Blue Ridge a few times before but never had a lot of time to spend fishing. Members of our Suncoast Fly Fishers Club fish in this area of Georgia each year and told me how great the fishing is, so I planned a longer stay.

The lower Toccoa river is a tailwater river that flows out of Blue Ridge Lake drawing water from the bottom of this large deep large reservoir, resulting in cold water that creates a great trout river all year round. This section of the river has both wild and stocked trout and is relatively easy to wade with both public and private access points.

So, like most of our traveling vacations, in between the sightseeing and shopping, I took some fishing time. After visiting the two local fly-fishing shops in Blue Ridge and asking about the fishing conditions, purchasing some recommended flies, and talking about available guides, I decided to take a risk and try exploring the river on my own. And wow, the fishing was awesome. I fished four mornings within a mile of our camping location, and another spent another day checking out different access points and rivers within an hour's drive of where we were staying.

On my first day fishing, I waded to a section close to our campsite. Like many trout rivers the Toccoa River sees a lot of fishing pressure and the trout become very wary and selective in their feeding habits, and I was interested in identifying areas that were holding fish and what they were actively feeding on. I spent the morning exploring the river, finding the runs and larger pools and observing the trout activity.

I saw a large number of trout rising to extremely small caddis flies and ants. I started fishing with size 18 and 20 caddis emerger flies under a larger foam ant. I caught three rainbow trout, each around 12 inches on the smaller emerger.

Continues on next page...



My wife Carole says that she prefers this trailer to camping in a tent. Then I'm ok with it, too.



A great wading spot on the Toccoa



Our traveling companions after a long walk and playing in the park

P2/Bob Burkard: Travel Trailer Trout Tripping



Brown trout caught on a dry fly foam beetle recommended by Toccoa River Outfitters & Fly Shop

This is a beautiful section on the river. While I was fishing, three otters swam right by me. I watched one of the otters come to the surface with a trout in this mouth. A short time later, a beaver also swam close to me. I saw these otters each morning when I was on the river.

I got more serious fishing on my second morning fishing. I caught 11 fish including two fat brown trout and two rainbow trout well over 14 inches. I alternated between small nymphs and dry flies and caught most of the fish on the nymphs. I was using my 9 foot 4-wt flyrod which is perfect for this sized water.

I waded much farther on my third outing and started trying all different

flies. This was a Saturday and there was a lot of fishing and recreational kayaking & tubing on this popular river. Six guide boats floated by me within an hour when I was fishing in one deeper pool, which spooked the fish and the trout stopped rising. So, I switched it up and went to larger steamers and I put on tandem wooly buggers, one followed by a second. Trout are usually attracted to the 1st fly and eat the 2nd one. I was pleasantly surprised when this worked. In addition to catching two brown trout and a larger rainbow trout, I caught a "Double Rainbow", one rainbow trout on each of the wooly buggers at the same time. This was an amazing day where I caught 18 trout and observed many more following the steamers but not eating them.



A "Double Rainbow" catch on tandem wooly buggers.

On my fourth and last fishing morning I tried a different location, and I fished exclusively using dry flies. This area had a long run with a seam that was perfect for long drifts with a dry fly. I practiced my casting and mending and caught 2 large rainbow trout that were over 14 inches. Again, these wary trout often followed my dry flies for long distances trying to determine if they should eat them. I love this type of fishing and keep busy trying different flies until I find ones that these trout will eat.

This fishing location is definitely a do-over for me and I plan on returning to fish the Toccoa and some of the nearby rivers when I can, hopefully with some of my Suncoast Fly Fishers club friends.

Next, we traveled to Wiscasset, Maine to visit Carole's parents who have been a huge part of my life since I was 17. I had planned more time fishing in Maine but spent most of my time visiting and helping my father-in-law complete some tasks around his house. I did get to fish for a few hours in a small brook that flows into the Montsweag Bay next to our campground. I was targeting Striped Bass that swim up the brook during the summer. However, I did not catch any striped bass but did catch 2 small bluefish (no pics of the fish). My nephew who lives in the area told me that striped bass often jump completely out of the water when they are swimming up these brooks and I did see three large striped bass jumping, but they were not interested in my fly. I am not experienced targeting these striped bass and next time I am in this area I will hire a fishing guide.

On the way home we stopped in Lancaster, PA to visit family and friends. I did not have time to fish but did visit with a friend who is new to fly fishing and we practiced casting. It was a great vacation, and it is great to be back home.

Bob

First Fishes on the Fly



New member Abby Gambrel caught her first fish on the fly at the July outing.

Let's start with loud applause for new member Abby Gambrel. Abby caught her first fish on the fly, a 12-inch seatrout, at the July outing. She caught it fishing the upper Tampa Bay flats.

Here's Abby: "I caught it wading off shore at Philippe Park. I don't know the different fly names yet, but it was a green one (after the fish weren't showing any interest in tan, white, and pink). Looking forward to the next outing!"

Abby



Abby's seatrout fly



John French

John French is a new member, too. He joined SFF in late 2024

"I went three months without catching my first fish. I went to Arrowhead one morning and landed a handful of trout; I couldn't believe it. I caught them on a Clouser that I tied.

I was like me catching bluegill on a Zebco 202 when I was a kid!

John



Remember Zebco's 202 closed-face reel?



Samantha and Wes Tallyn: A two-fer in the Bahamas.

We fished East End Lodge in Grand Bahama with the Drifter Club back in June. We both got our first bonefish on a fly!



Samantha

John French: No luck fishing the Keys but lucky lobstering



No luck fishing, but I got some lobsters in the keys last week.

John



Support Our Favorite Fly Fishing Guides

Fly Fishing Charters St. Petersburg/Tampa Bay

Captain Andy Austin

Phone: 954-821-1390

Email: andyaustin519@gmail.com

Website: andysfishingcharters.com

U.S.C.G Licensed and Insured

Full & 1/2 Day Trips

Inshore and Near Coastal



Tarpon, Snook, Redfish
Speckled Trout & More

Captain Andy Austin

USCG Licensed

Capt. Brad Lowman
lowmansluckyfly@gmail.com
727.484.0065

Capt. Matt Foster
matthewfoster91@gmail.com
813.765.2932

Give us a Follow!

  gulfcoastfly



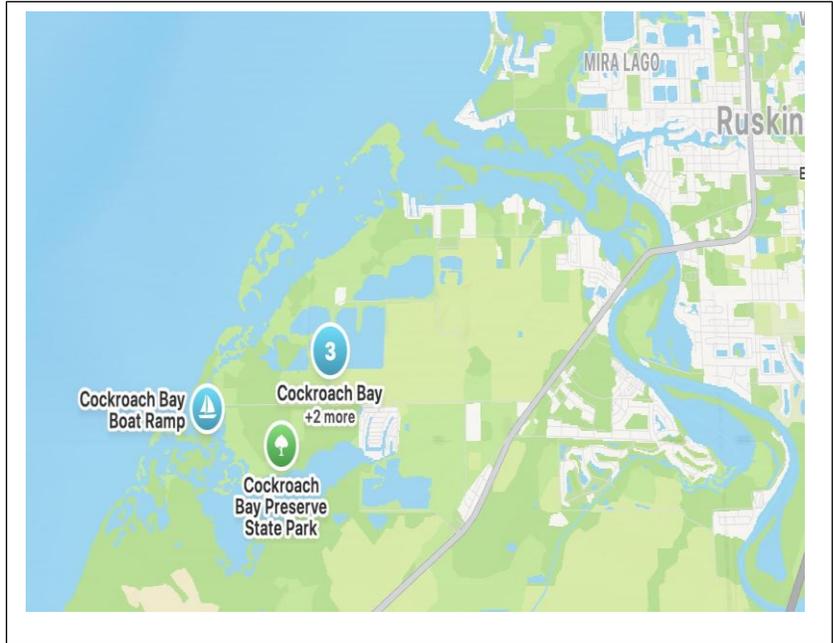
Capt. Matt Foster

Robert Fischer Cockroach Bay Seatrout



Robert Fischer with a bonefish caught in Cuba (not Cockroach Bay)

I caught a few trout near Cockroach Bay last week but they were in 4 to 5 feet of water. Nothing on the flats probably due to the heavy rains and too much fresh water.



Robert

Support Our Favorite Fly Fishing Guides

Tampa Bay Native Fishing Charters
 Capt. Ethan Kiburz
 EthanKiburz@gmail.com
 (727) 278-4707

Specializing in Fly Fishing & Light Tackle
 Tarpon, Snook, Redfish, & Trout

Capt. Ethan Kiburz

www.capt russ.com
 USCG Licensed & Insured

russ@capt russ.com
 Charter & Instruction

Captain Russ Shirley
 Fly Fishing and Light Tackle Specialist

Tampa Bay 727-459-3896 Native Guide

Tarpon • Snook • Redfish
 Trout • Mackerel • Shark

Capt. Russ Shirley

Jack Collins: Reeling in the Memories



SFF member Jack Collins is one of several St Pete Mayfly Project volunteers.

Editor's Note: At the August SFF Board of Directors' Zoom meeting board members learned about the good work that The Mayfly Project is doing to help foster children by teaching them how to catch a fish with a fly rod. The board is considering a proposal to support the St. Petersburg Mayfly Project headed by SFF members Scott Russell and co-lead mentor Tim Elms.

The St. Petersburg Mayfly Project headed up by Scott Russell and Tim Elms, SFF members, completed another successful year in May. This project aimed to provide a positive and educational experience for the six foster children, promoting a sense of community and connection with nature through the art of fly fishing.



Teaching fly fishing helps foster children conquer generalized anxiety and instills in them a love of nature.



Scott Russell (left), founder and leading mentor for The Mayfly Project of St. Petersburg

The first meeting started with some apprehension from both mentors and kids. The ice was soon broken with some pizza and shared fishing experiences. The first two meetings included casting practice, along with knots and fly tying. The next three gatherings were on the water with education and fishing at the Suncoast Youth Conservation Center, wading the flats at Fort De Soto Park, and catching fish at a private stocked pond in north Tampa.

The impact on the children became obvious as the

weeks progressed and everyone became more comfortable around each other and the fly gear. The final meeting started with giving each child their own complete fly rod outfit along with a sling pack filled with nippers, flies, forceps and all the gear needed to continue fly fishing. With their new gear they headed out for a couple hours of fishing. Everyone was catching fish with at least one girl catching as many as 30 fish. Lunch with cake for dessert was next so we could celebrate the five weeks together. Lastly the awards ceremony commenced where each child's fishing accomplishments and unique personalities were celebrated with cheers and a certificate.

Continued on next page



Tim Elms, co-lead mentor for the Mayfly Project of St. Petersburg



Greg Clark scoping the flats of Fort De Soto Park

P2/Jack Collins: Memories are made of this

The kids not only acquired new skills but also developed a sense of accomplishment and confidence. The project provided them with a supportive environment where they could build trust and form meaningful relationships with the volunteers. Additionally, the children gained a deeper appreciation for the environment and the importance of conservation. This experience helped them to feel more connected to their community and the natural world around them.



James Davis spots a fish.

So, keep an eye out for a young person waving a fly rod the next time you're on the water around St. Pete because it just might be a Mayfly kid. To check out the Mayfly Project: go to <https://themayflyproject.com/> To check out the St. Petersburg chapter go to <https://themayflyproject.com/st-petersburg-florida-project/>



Recognize the Suncoast Fly Fishers? In 2025 ten awesome volunteers stepped up to mentor six children from the Salvation Army group homes. In March the group started meeting in a series of five outings over ten weeks. During these outings the children learned knot tying, casting, fly tying, safety, identifying fishes, and environmental appreciation

Bruce Evensen / Bill Scarola: David Redd's Gurgler Shrimp



Bruce Evensen



David Redd's Gurgler Shrimps



Bill Scarola

SFF President David Redd led fly tyers through the steps tying his Gurgler Shrimp at Bruce Evensen's fly tying studio on Monday, August 4. Bruce's studio located next to his house at 531 80 Ave. No. St. Pete. Come one come all! Members and guests are welcome. We have materials and vices if you need. Everyone's attention is to be given to the instructor during his teaching. Side conversations are a distraction, so please cooperate!! By ORDER OF THE "LORD OF THE HOUSE!" our host BRUCE EVENSEN!!! Those in violation will be put in FLYTIER'S jail!!! FOREVVVVVEEEEEERRRRRRR! After the 1st fly you can chat all you want.

Materials

- Hook - Gamakatsu B10s size 1
- Thread - 140 or 210 the color of the fly or Flat waxed
- Horns - bucktail color of the fly
- Flash - crystal flash color of the fly
- Legs - rubber legs color of the fly
- Eyes - shrimp eyes
- Body - 2mm foam color of the fly
- Swimmers (under legs)- large Palmer chenille color of the fly
- Under body - med cactus chenille or Estaz color of the fly



P2/David Redd's Gurgler Shrimp

Gurgler Shrimp Tying Steps

- 1) Start thread behind the hook eye and wrap back to the start of the bend.
- 2) Select a match stick clump of bucktail, clean the short hairs and measure a shank length and tie in where you thread is. (Hint: do not pre-trim your bucktail, tie in along the hook shank until about 1/8 inch behind the eye. This will help build the body and add some bouyancy. End with your thread at about the halfway point.
- 3) Select two strands of crystal flash, wrap the flash around your thread and tie in on top of the shank. Return thread to the half way point.
- 4) Select two rubber legs, tie the ends of the two legs in on one side of the hook and then tie the other ends on the other side of the hook. Return thread to the halfway point.
- 5) Tie in shrimp eyes, one on either side of the hook. Keep thread at the tie in point at the bend.
- 6) Cut a strip of 2mm foam approximately 1/2 inch wide. Cut a 3/4 point at one end of the strip. At a full width point just before the point, tie on the foam with the point extending over the bucktail. Make sure to keep the foam centered on the shank. Fold foam over the tie in point to temporarily have it out of the way.
- 7) Tie in a piece of the Palmer chenille and move it back just as the foam.
- 8) Tie in a piece of the cactus Chenille at the same spot. Advance your thread until about 1/8 inch behind the hook eye.
- 9) Wrap your cactus chenille forward in touching turns until you reach your thread. Tie off and trim excess.
- 10) Wrap your Palmer chenille forward in open spirals (about 4 turns) and tie off at the same point. With you left hand, pinch the chenille fibers in the top of the shank and trim flush.
- 11) Fold your foam back over, push the foam back towards the bucktail to form a small "bubble". Tie down the foam where you tied off you chenille. Take the strip of foam extending over the hook eye and bend it back to form a small "lip" at the front of the fly and tie in at the same point. Pull the lip up and make some thread wraps in front of the lip to help stand it up. Whip finish and trim your thread.
- 12) Apply head cement to the thread wraps.

###



Bill Scarola tied the Gurgler Shrimp in two colors and varied the underbody materials.

Bruce Evensen / Bill Scarola: Albie "Plaything" Fly

SFF member Troy Dillman led fly tyers through the steps tying this fly at Bruce Evensen's fly tying studio on Monday, August 11. Troy's steps below are mostly those of the fly inventor, Richard Regean, who gave his fly a rather off-putting name. We've renamed it the Albie "Plaything": fly.

Bruce Evensen's Fly Tying Studio is next door to his home at 531 80 Ave. N in St. Pete. This the place to be every Monday starting at 6 pm. Members and guests are welcome. Materials and vices are available. Reminder: Please pay attention to the instructor. Side conversations are a distraction. After the first fly is tied you can chat all you want. Bill Scarola

Materials

Hook: #1/0 Gamakatsu SC-15 or similar SW hook

Thread: White Danville Flat Waxed Nylon 210

Eyes: 4-6mm 3D Adhesive Holographic Eyes

Body: Pearl Cactus Chenille, Large

Tail: White American Hackle (Preferred) or alternative white hackle (6 needed)

Flashabou 1/69" Lateral Scale Opal Mirage (Larger more visible, use various colors)

DNA Holo Chromosome (alternative flat flash/tinsel)

Adhesive: E6000 & Solarez Thin Hard Formula or similar



Albie "W____" Fly

Steps

1. Start thread at the eye and wrap to the bend (should hang at the hook barb)

Bruce Tip: Holding tension on the tag end as a guide will allow tight concentric progressive wraps.

2. Line up two pair of feathers (splayed or praying hands) cupped together on top of hook with tips 3" beyond bend of hook. Do NOT trim, leaving webby barbs intact; this will keep them from rolling on hook shank. Initial 2 loose wraps...tighten pull UP on thread with 8-10 wraps. Trim excess.

3. On top of feathers, using "V" tying technique, divide evenly 3-4 strands of flash on both sides of hook. Trim slightly longer than feathers.

4. At same point, on top of feathers, attach the tip of Pearl Cactus Chenille and secure with several wraps. Advance thread using spiral wraps short of eye.

5. Palmer Cactus Chenille forward with snug wraps, being careful not to trap fibers, to the thread, tie off, cut away excess chenille.

6. At eye of hook, tie in 3rd pair of feathers, one on each side (praying hands). The tips should all line up, and concave side of feathers should cup around first two pairs.

7. At eye of hook on the middle of the feathers on each side, tie in one strand of Flashabou Lateral Scale. Do your best to align with quill of feather to create appearance of a lateral line. Do NOT cut excess beyond the eye. Wrap excess back to bend, make several wraps then cut excess. This step is to ensure Flashabou Lateral Scale doesn't pull loose. Whip Finish.

8. Using bodkin, add pea sized drop of E6000 under the feather and Flashabou lateral Scale on each side of hook working into chenille. Improves durability.

9. Slightly in front of hook point add eyes with bottom of eyes even with hook shank. Endure eyes aligned to avoid fly spinning when stripped.

Captain Pat Damico: Captain's Corner



Capt. Pat Damico: Club member and FFI master certified casting instructor

Subject: Fly fishing Florida freshwater ponds

Floating weeds and grass are things we must contend with when fishing with a fly rod this time of year. If we don't make a fly look natural, fish will refuse it. Having some foreign green stuff on the fly hook will always get a refusal. Flies that represent baitfish must be moved through the water to look natural. Select fly patterns that have the hook pointed up with relatively stiff hair extending past the hook bend, thus giving you a weedless option. If weeds are on the surface, use a weighted fly and even a sink tip line that will get your offering deeper, thus avoiding the weeds. Clouser-type minnows and bend backs are good examples. Floating flies can also have the hook point upward or completely protected. Examples are mouse patterns tied with deer hair. If you tie your flies or have a fly tier who keeps you supplied, use a strand of 20 or 30 pound hard monofilament tied in at the head to protect the hook point. Single strand wire is also an effective alternative, especially for darker flies. Flies that encourage strikes with little movement are also a great choice; crab, shrimp, and sand flea imitations fill the bill here.

Time your cast to wait until there is an opening in the grass before casting the fly. Paying attention to wind and tide is a necessity. Accuracy is important. You want your fly to hit an open spot that is weed-free. Practice casting to targets in your backyard to improve your ability to hit a small place. When fishing canals or channels, the windward side is often littered with debris, leaving the other side relatively clear. Beach fishing is another great option, targeting fish in the wash close to the sand, usually a weed-free zone.

Fly fisherman Pat Damico fishes lower Tampa Bay and can be reached at captpatdamico.com and 727-504-8649.

Subject: How to adjust for sunny and windless day

Beautiful sunny windless days may be great for a lot of things, but fly fishing isn't one of them unless you make some adjustments. Clear water, especially in the Gulf, has presented many issues when sight casting. Snook are still around and share their water close to shore with some baby tarpon. If we can easily see fish at a distance, how do we appear to them? Not using a flats boat is a good start. Use your boat to get to fish that are undisturbed, then leave it and wade if the bottom is suitable. It is even better to stay on land away from the water when fish are close to shore. A shadow or flash from the sun on your equipment must be avoided. Leave brightly colored clothes at home. Blend in with the water or sky. Minimize what you carry. Metal fly boxes, hemostats, clippers, reflective sunglasses even light-colored skin can be covered to allow a closer approach as well as protect you from the sun. Wear a neutral-colored wide-brimmed hat with a dark underside to improve vision with good polarized sunglasses. A good pair of fly fishing gloves also has a thicker area to prevent cut fingers from frequent stripping of the fly line while working a fly. The new distance fly lines that have a rough texture cut skin easily. Long, thinner tapered leaders, often 12 to 15 feet, will keep the thicker fly line away from the fish. Cast accurately and allow the smaller fly to land on the water softly, well ahead of a moving fish. Very long casts are necessary and should be practiced with an absolute minimum of false casting.

Pat

Bill AuCoin: Flyfisher Flyover



Get ready to get -- Our August outing is at Fort De Soto Park at the mouth of Tampa Bay. This may be the very best place for wade and kayak fishing in the Tampa Bay Area all year around. Here's a link to the park on the county parks website. BTW, our brisket and pulled pork picnic is at Pavilion #3. Get there by noon. ([Fort De Soto Park](#))

Thank you TBEP: How good or bad is the health of Tampa Bay? Tampa Bay Estuary Program collects and digests all the data. This report covers 2022 through 2024. ([TBEP](#))

Did somebody say TOXINS? Yes, and we're talking scallops. ([Citrus County Chronicle](#))

Watch and learn: Are you tying your knots correctly? I just got a text from former member Dennis Marquis with links to his favorite leader knots; Double surgeons loop knot for leader, double fishers bend for leader sections, and a non-slip monofilament knot for fly loop. Check 'em out. ([Animated Knots](#))

Fly fishing is back on the big screen -- Michael Douglas is 80 and we haven't seen him on the big screen in a long while. Rick Warfel reports that he just saw a promo for a new Michael Douglas film called "Looking Through Water". It has some fly fishing themes and opens this September. Here is a link to the trailer. ([Bing Videos](#))

FFI Fly Fest 2026 --Fly Fest is September 26-27 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. ([FFI](#))

Finding peace. Project Healing Waters hosted veterans for a fly fishing expedition at the Freedom Ranch for Heroes in Wise River, Montana. Thanks to Ron Bloomquist for the heads up and the link. ([Apple News](#))

Python Meet Robot -- Maybe this is a good thing. I've been thinking it would be exciting to try to grab one of these pythons by the tail. Not. ([Newsmax](#))

Words of the Wise

- *"Fishing in a place is a meditation on the rhythm of a tide, a season, the arc of a year, and the seasons of life." – Carl Safina*
- *"The finest gift you can give to any fisherman is to put a good fish back, and who knows if the fish that you caught isn't someone else's gift to you?" – Lee Wulff*
- *Fishing will do a lot for a man but it won't make him truthful. – Unknown*

(Tip of the Hat: Pinched from the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club's August newsletter)

Special Friends of
Suncoast Fly Fishers

ORVIS[®]
www.orvis.com/



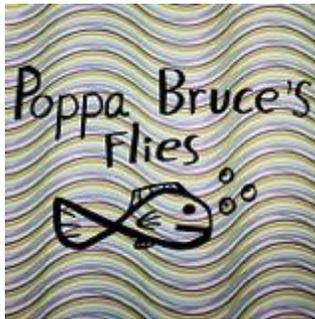
www.stpetefishingoutfitters.com



www.plantationoncrystalriver.com/



www.flyfishersinternational.org/



www.etsy.com/shop/PoppaBrucesFlies



www.billjacksons.com



WORLD FAMOUS FISHING LINE  SINCE 1915

www.cortlandline.com



www.thomasbruce.com/



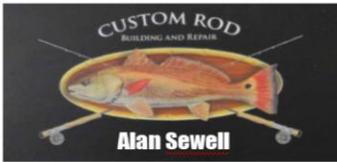
<https://www.canoe-country-fl.com/>



www.flyfishingwesternwyoming.com/



Special Friends of
Suncoast Fly Fishers



Email Alan Sewell
sewellalan@yahoo.com



www.tampabayonthefly.com/

BRUCE EVENSEN
CUSTOM FLIES



Email
Evensenb@gmail.com



www.nighflyrods.com



www.captpatdamico.com/



Email Jim Swann at
jalswann@aol.com



ANDYTHORNAL.COM



www.bobleestire.com/



www.carbonmarine.com/



www.metalfab-inc.com