

On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg

The May Outing is On. Virtually. May 23-24. Page 7

Caronavirus Fly P5



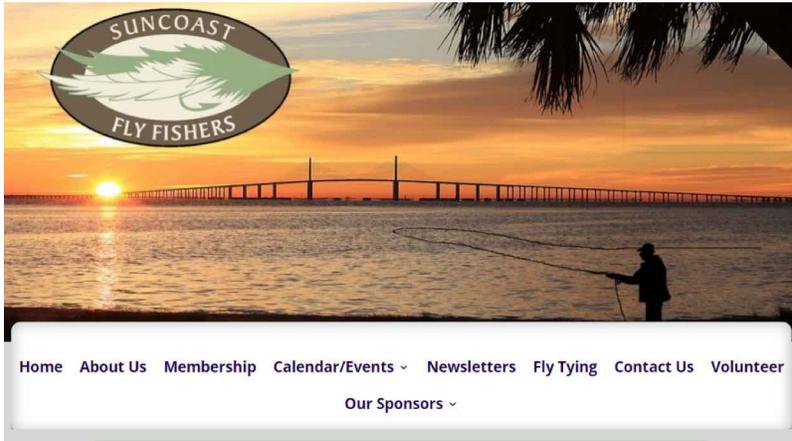
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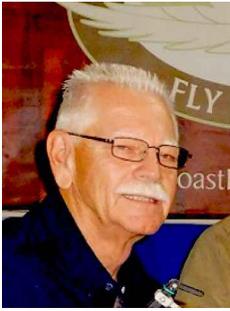


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TBFFC in Cuba P14





President's Letter

May, 2020

Suncoast Fly Fishers,

Like everything else in the world these days, the Corona virus has had a big effect on the club and the way we do business. Events, meetings and outings have been canceled. The board is meeting on ZOOM video conference and when I call a member to talk about something they are more excited about the toilet paper they scored this week than the size of the fish they recently caught.

Things do seem to be getting better and we will eventually get back to “normal” or at least a new normal. If you are reading this message you can be sure of one thing. Our newsletter, *On The Fly*, and editor Bill AuCoin have not missed a beat. Based on the articles submitted by our members, folks are still fishing, tying flies and telling lies. When you think about it, fly fishing is the ultimate social distancing activity. Who wants to get close to a crazy person whipping back and forth a long rod attached to a fat line with a razor sharp hook on the end of it?

Your local fly shops are getting back in business, guides are starting to take clients fishing and there are more boats milling about than I have seen in years. Soon SFF will dip its toe in the water and get back to being a fly fishing club.

There won't be a club meeting this month but we are going to host a “virtual” outing. See the announcement on page 7 by Outing Chairman Bob Burkard for details.

In June there will be an online dock light panel and our regular club dock light outing will be held as normal in June.

It is too early to say when our regular meetings will resume but we are exploring strategies for holding future meetings online.

I hope everyone is doing well. Please let me know if there is anything the club can do to help serve our members during these difficult times.

Stay Safe!

Rick

Rick Warfel

Meetings, Outings, and More

Virtual outing Saturday and Sunday

SATURDAY, MAY 23-24, OUTING

- The May outing is ON, but it's a "virtual outing." We don't meet up for lunch.
 - Fly fish Saturday and/or Sunday in Pinellas or Hillsborough Counties, saltwater or freshwater.
 - Take lots of pictures and videos and quickly share them with the club.
 - Email reports to suncoastflyfishersfl@gmail.com
 - Text reports to [610-256-7781](tel:610-256-7781).
 - There will be prizes for the best selfies with fish.
 - Details on page 7
-

Canceled

THURSDAY, MAY 21 MEETING, WALTER FULLER PARK

TBD virtual meeting

THURSDAY, JUNE 18 MEETING

- Docklight fishing panel -- tutorial with questions and answers
-

Good to Go ... virtual or the real thing. Stay tuned.

DOCKLIGHT OUTING

FRIDAY-SATURDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 19-20-21 Friday - Saturday-Sunday

- Fish docks or beaches from Friday night through noon on Sunday.
-

Online fly tying? Maybe

- Fly tying Mondays at Bruce Evensen's fly tying studio are still off the table but...
 - The club is seriously thinking about having online fly tying videos with our club fly tying stars.
-

Still a possibility: Zups Resort, July 14-19

Want to catch 100 smallmouth bass per day? Yep, that's Zups Resort on Ontario's Lac La Croix. Mike Simmons is the go-to guy. Email him at yankee3047@yahoo.com

On the horizon...

- *New club website is getting closer to going public. Stay tuned.*
- *September Fly Market. It will be like a flea market except we'll sell fly fishing stuff.*
- *Big Gun Shootout practice sessions. Quin Berry will organize it.*
- *Christmas Party Silent Auction*
- *Hog Roast. 2021?*

Hunkering Down

Can't wait until we're able to meet again

I joined SFF in 2020. My first outing was to be at Fort De Soto but you may recall the wind was not cooperating that day. I'm new to fly fishing and am only able to wade fish. It's been really tough to know where to go and on top of that my family and I had symptoms of COVID-19 for the first three weeks of April. We're all feeling much better and have tested negative. That being said, I cannot wait until we're able to meet again so I can start my fly fishing journey again. I'm in this for the long haul! Hope everyone at SFF and their families are well and safe. Kind regards,

Mark Manoly

Read more Tom McGuane

Thank you again for another great publication. It brightens my day each month to see all the fly fishing in Tampa Bay and beyond. I especially liked the link to the stolen ashes of Captain Bill Curtis. It initially caught my eye because of Tom McGuane's mention. I am reading one of his books -- *The Longest Silence, A Life in Fishing*. The stolen ashes is a little bizarre since there seems to be no leads after two years. But, his friends had some colorful stories of their encounters with the captain. This story makes guiding sound like a tough profession with cherished memories in the water. I do have to put a plug in for Thomas McGuane's book. I'm only half way through but, it seems like he certainly spent a life on the water. Tight lines brother in these separated times,

Jack Collins

Heading to Wyoming

We hope all is well in Florida! We are heading to Wyoming in a few weeks and look forward to some sunshine, lack of crowds, fresh air and good fishing! Our schedule is filling up again after a bit of slack and we're looking forward to a good season! We'll see you guys in the fall!! Take care and stay safe.

Dayle and Barbara Mazzarella

Lucky to live in paradise

Went out in my boat to Cockroach Bay and caught a pinkfish, ladyfish, jack, puffer and three trout. Had a great time using my 5# rod. I expect you could call that a *poor man's grand slam*.

My wife and I are very lucky living in Florida. The pandemic has had very little effect on our lives apart from the bike trails we go on being closed. My daughter who is in lockdown in England is allowed one walk a day and to shop for food. If she buys something that is not a necessity and is stopped by the police she can be fined, absolutely ridiculous. We are lucky living in paradise.

Andy Constantinou

A note from Possum Creek, West Virginia

I have been fishing at the horseshoe bend of Possum Creek, back a 1/4 mile behind the house. ... once... no hits, bites, missed hookups, et al! We've had loads of rain and every stream, cree and river has been flooding. We are 14 inches above normal for the year! So, I've read 4,800 pages of lots of different kinds of books. I have built new blue bird boxes, refurbished others that had been out on posts forty years. It's harder to remodel one than build a new one! Soooo, no fish catching here. Did I answer your question? Oh, I've been at my farm for seven weeks now, and haven't had any problems. Thank the Lord.

Jimmie Carroll

Zoom fly tying? Funny you should ask. The board is looking at it.

No fishing, and not much else in the realm of fly fishing. However, the remodeling construction of the house has pretty much been done. Have any of you more tech savvy younger people ever thought of trying to have a virtual fly tying event on Zoom? My wife is doing a quilt making event on Zoom this week. It's better that sitting around watching the paint dry.

James Holley

More Hunkering Down

Teacher, author, fly casting instructor

I am glad school is back. From March 13th, school was out of session for two weeks. I wrote a couple hours every day and took UV Therapy at least every other day. I've started more writing projects than I will finish, and my casting arm is worn out! Best to all."

Chris O'Byrne



Wally's 31-pound amberjack

Hunkering down deep offshore

I have been fishing but not much fly fishing. I, however, had a great offshore trip last week. While fishing with a friend on some mid-depth wrecks, we landed and released a 4 1/2 ft. barracuda on a tube lure and a 31-lb amberjack on a live bait. I looked up the IGFA amberjack tippet class world records and I am impressed that anyone has landed one of these powerful fish on a fly much less the record 103 pound fish caught on 16lb tippet off of Key West in 1977. Wow!! Regards,

Waldemar (Wally) Vidal

Woolly Buggers anyone?

I was bored so I got busy yesterday and today. I needed to tie some woolly buggers. Great fly, fresh and salt. I usually tie them 2-3 times bigger for salt water. Brown colors are next.

Bill Scarola



Dennis Marquis + Vise + Time on his hands = lots of weird flies



Virus fly: Don't get too close



Panda Flu Fly



I'm bored gurgler

Dennis Marquis

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 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

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

(sign in from your personal account)

Club and FFI Membership combined

Suncoast Fly Fishers currently has 125 members including 15 family members and 6 honorary members. Annual dues are payable in September. This also includes benefits and annual membership in [Fly Fishers International](#) and the [Florida Council](#) of Fly Fishers International

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Suncoast Fly Fishers

P. O. Box 40821

St Petersburg, FL 33743

www.suncoastflyfishers.org

Club Officers

Pres: Rick Warfel

Vice Pres: Quin Berry

Secretary: David Redd

Treasurer: Tom Gadacz

Board of Directors

Bill Scarola, Bob Burkard, Bruce

Evensen, Ryan Sollars, Cliff Nigh, Karen

Warfel, George Haseltine, James Davis

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.

Casting: Pat Damico, Dayle Mazzarella

FFI Liaison: Pat Damico

Conservation: Cliff Nigh

Fly Tying: Myron Hansen

Membership: Tom Gadacz

New Members: Rick Warfel

Webmaster: Dennis Marquis

Facebook: Woody Miller

Hog Roast: Open

Outings: Bob Burkard, David Redd, Bill AuCoin

Outreach, shows: David Redd, Bob Burkard, Bill Scarola, Tom Gadacz

Raffles: Dave Barson

Succession Plan: Rick Warfel

Programs: Board of Directors

Publicity: Bill AuCoin

On The Fly

Bill AuCoin, editor; Duane Mertz, Anne Hays, Bob Hood, Tim Elms, Marshall Craig

Bob Burkard: The May Outing is On. Virtually.



Bob Burkard, Chairman of the Outing Committee

Hello fellow Suncoast Fly Fishers members. I know that you are missing our monthly outings as much as I am during this time of social distancing. I hope that everyone is taking the necessary precautions and are staying healthy. I look forward to a time when we can get together and celebrate our love of fly fishing with fishing, food, and storytelling. In the meantime, I am proposing that we Suncoast Fly Fishers participate in a “Virtual Outing” and share our experiences.

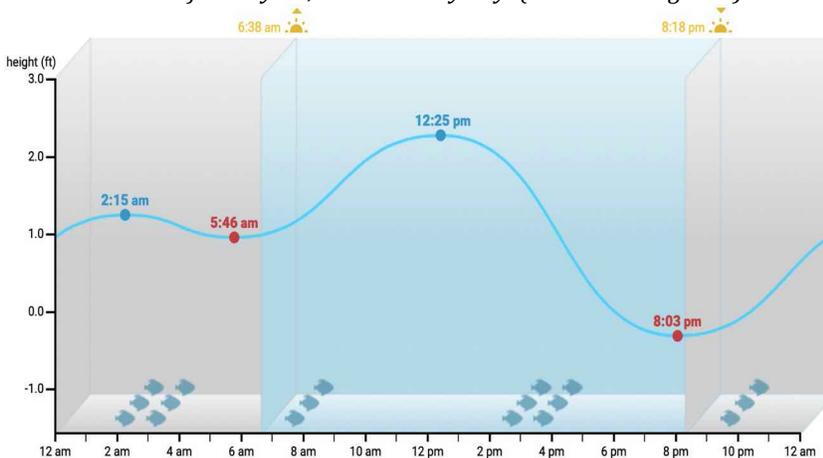
During weekend of May 23 – 24th, we should all go fly fishing. Go anywhere in Pinellas or Hillsborough counties. Fish freshwater or saltwater. Send pictures or videos or stories that we can share with our members on our website and Facebook pages.

Email them to suncoastflyfishersfl@gmail.com or text to 610-256-7781. You can also post your pictures, videos and stories directly on our Suncoast Fly Fishers Facebook page. Click [here](#).

Our target saltwater fish is spotted seatrout, and our target freshwater fish is bream.

- Prize for the best selfie with a fish
- Prize for the largest target fish
- Prize for the best fish video
- Prize for the best non-angler online commentary

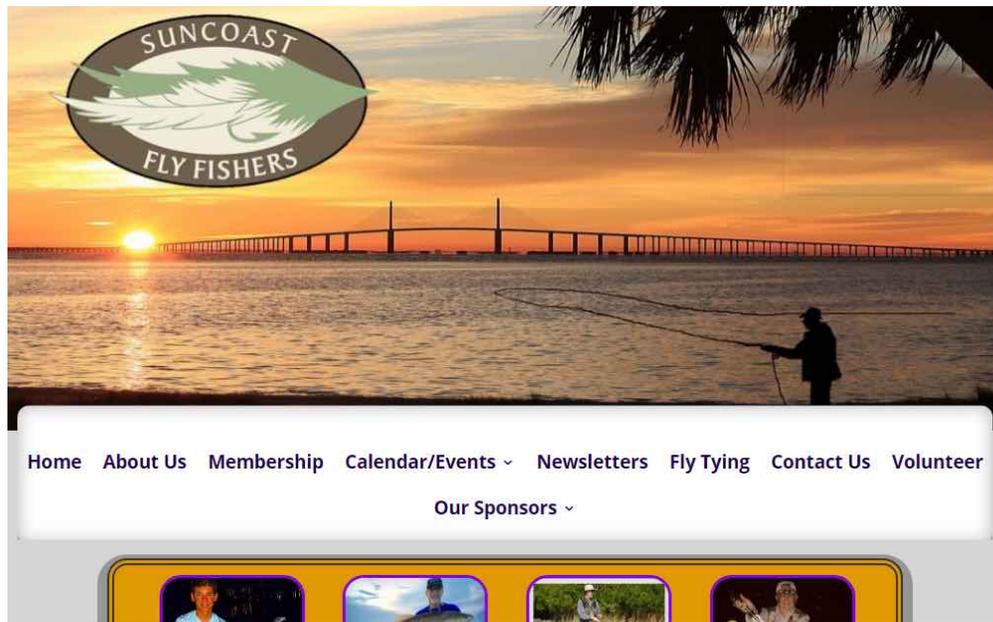
Tides for May 23, Sunshine Skyway. (Tides4Fishing.com)



2020 Outing Tournament Leaders

<i>Species</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Winner</i>	<i>Outing (Month)</i>
Longest bream			
Longest black bass			
Longest snook	18"	Bruce Evensen	Weedon Island Preserve (January)
Longest redfish			
Longest ladyfish	25"	Mandy McGarry	Weedon Island Preserve (January)
Longest seatrout			

Dennis Marquis: New Website on the Way



Coming Soon! New Suncoast Fly Fishers Website



Dennis Marquis

We are very close to having a brand new website that is built on a contemporary platform that we can more easily update and keep fresh. Our website is hosted by a company named BlueHost and we are using WordPress as the web development environment.

I have been working with a web developer who was hired by the Board to put up the new site. I will continue to volunteer to serve as the website administrator, to listen to feedback, and make changes as needed. We will be making monthly updates to load in new information from the newsletters, announcements, pictures, and current events.

The new site looks and functions much better than the old SFF website but we want to continue to make the site better. I could use some help! I find that I am not as good at digital manipulation of photos as I would like and it would be useful if there was someone in the club that had any experience that would help move the site forward.

I'm looking to establish a team that can work together having fun and doing something good for the club. We would like any additional members, who think they can help, to step forward and give it a try. If interested, you can call me at 215-783-0409.

Dennis

You're Good to Go to Our Favorite Fly Shops. Check Details.



St. Pete Fishing Outfitters

Contact: Cliff Nigh

727-317-4949

We're closed Monday and Tuesday for now. Regular hours Wednesday through Sunday (9 to 6). Employees will have masks, gloves, etc. Customers are encouraged to wear masks but not mandatory as far as I know. Limit of 5 customers in the store at any one time. Fly tying classes are suspended for now and considering whether to resume classes, once a week, online, depending on attendee input.



Tampa Bay On the Fly / Minnows and Monsters

Contact: Enver Hysni

727-504-4062

Shop is closed Sun - Mon but open for regular hours (10- 5:30) all other days. Please observe social distancing, 2 customers in the shop at a time. Employees wear mask and customers encouraged to wear mask. Curbside pickup is available. Please call to arrange pick up. Tying classes have been suspended until further notice.



Bill Jackson's

Contact: Mike Sfakianos

727-576-4169

Shop is open Mon - Sat (10 - 5). Regular business resumed on May 15. Gun shop and range are also open. Social distancing and social hygiene practices will be in place. All classes have been canceled until further notice. Please call for details.

Tom Gadacz: Some updates on Covid-19

We are beginning to see a loosening of confining ourselves to our dwelling. Please take precautions until we have effective and universal treatments.

Unfortunately, we do not have control of the virus. Like all pandemics, safety consists of effective treatments against the virus and its complications. This will occur when we have proven antiviral drugs.

Two other key components are testing to determine who has been infected -- they should quarantine themselves -- and vaccines to immunize against the virus.

Also, public health measures have been shown to markedly decrease the risk and severity of COVID infection. The key elements of mitigation, including social distancing and handwashing combined with universal use of masks, have been demonstrated to be highly effective to decrease risks related to this disease.

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus and is transmitted by inhaling the virus from droplets of an infected person sneezing, coughing, or even shouting. It is also transmitted from touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your face. The virus cannot reproduce unless it is in a host where it takes over certain cells and reproduces, infecting the host. COVID-19 attacks the lining cells of our lungs, the alveolar cells.

Several medical colleagues and I have developed a web site that has five reliable reference web sites to search for specific COVID-19 information. Also, there is a special topics section that will provide updated information. These are the topics we present and review every week. You are welcome to share it with your friends. Go [here](#).

Summary of what's new regarding immunization and treatment with antivirals:

- Seven of the roughly 90 vaccine projects being pursued have reached the stage of clinical trials and are moving ahead at unheard-of speed but their effectiveness is uncertain. How soon will it be available to millions, even billions of people? Will the rush sacrifice safety? Here's an interesting article in the [New York Times](#). (Note: behind paywall.).
- Some public health officials say the more immediately promising field might be the development of treatments to speed recovery. Remdesivir, an antiviral drug previously tried in the fight against Ebola, has emerged as an option but is far from a sure thing. [NYT article](#). (Note: behind paywall)
- Which country or company will win the race? "We will need many different vaccines to cross the finish line," a development expert said.

Stay safe. Tie your favorite flies. Find a secluded place to fly fish.

Tom



*Tom Gadacz, MD, President,
Florida Council, Fly Fishers
International*

Smitty's Fly Box



Layne (Smitty) Smith

Skull 'n' Bones

I sent a bunch of these flies to a friend of mine who was going bonefishing in the Bahamas and he said he hooked up almost every cast. He was very pleased with the performance of the flies enough that he wanted me to make some more for himself and some for his friends as well. The fly can be fished three different ways ...as a shrimp or as a crab or as a baitfish, all depending on your retrieve.



Materials

Hook: Gamakatsu B10S size 6.
Thread: Pink Flat-waxed Nylon
Tail: Rose DNA Frosty Fish Fiber
Flash: Pink Crystal Flash
Body: Creamy Pink Cross-cut Rabbit Flesh Strips
Collar: Ice Dub UV Pink Shrimp
Head: Fish Skulls Pinky Purple Pearl small

Tying Instructions



1. Tie in sparse hank (doubled V-style) of Rose Fish Fiber 2½ times shank length.



2. Tie in 2 strands Pink Crystal Flash in the same manner.



3. Tie in Cross-cut Rabbit and palmer forward, leaving room for collar.

4. Tie in collar of UV Ice Dub and whip finish.

5. Apply a dab of Fletch-Tite Gel (or Zap-a-Gap Gel) on front of collar then slide the Fish Skull over the eye and press into place.

6. Re-attach thread and tie a thread dam in front of Skull to hold in place. Apply coat of favorite head cement.

Bruce Evensen: Blondie -- Fly of the Month



Bruce Evensen

Thanks to Bill Scarola for the photo and instructions.

Bruce Evensen's Blondie is a minnow imitation that appeals to fresh and saltwater fish year-around, and it will invite fish bites for Suncoast Fly Fishers fishing May's "virtual" outing.

Materials

- Body: White bucktail only or, alternately, chartreuse and pearl Flashabou with peacock herl and silver tinsel
- Hook: #2 -3407 or # 2 stingers
- Glue: UV Epoxy and Super Glue.
- Eyes: Black marker or small stick ons
- Thread: White flat waxed and/or Uni Mono

Tying sequence

1. Wrap hook from eye to bend.
2. Add white bucktail for the tail. Tie up to and just in front of the bend. Tail length should be 1-1/2 times hook shank length.
3. Add tinsel from 3/8" behind hook eye building up a thick body in the middle of the shank. Be sure to extend it beyond the bucktail fibers.
4. Tie in 6-8 strands of pearl flash in front of the tinsel so that it stays on top of the shank.
5. For the top of the fly tie in bucktail in front of the tinsel.
6. If using peacock herl, tie it in above the top bucktail.
6. Whip finish a small head to secure bucktail, tinsel, and Flashabou.
7. Use black marker to dot the eyes or add the stick ones
8. Cover the head area with UV epoxy and cure.



Top: Blondie with bucktail, Flashabou, peacock herl, and silver tinsel. Below, Blondie with bucktail only. You can top off the bucktail-only version with peacock herl as well.

Bruce

New member, new water

Tim Elms: Déjà Vu

I have found fishing to be essential for my own health and sanity

Howdy! It's Groundhog Day!!!!!! I am not sure what day or month it is. I do not know what I should write this month.... I had it in my plan for the last two months that I would have a tarpon story for ya in my May article. Well, I have quite a bit of stories, but I won't tell them until I have a silver king in my hands.....



Tim's pond snook are heating up

... appreciation and your whole day fishing changes in a minute." I bet there is a much higher lesson with that for life.

So, instead, I'll talk about my appreciation for what we have in these insane times... I find myself on days where fishing is slow wondering what has changed. I *expect* to catch as many or more as the day before, which is why I must remind myself that it's fishing and not catching. And with fly fishing, its casting and not catching. I read somewhere last week, "Trade your expectations for

When my wife and I moved here two years ago I knew that I was going to get into fly fishing more. WHAT? More than Colorado? Yes, I fished many times with my brothers, in-laws, and nieces, and nephews. Fishing in small rivers, creeks, and high alpine lakes are mind-blowingly surreal, but I found trout to be kind of lack luster. Especially nymphing. I am not a very good nymph.



Big bass love to eat frogs



Big 'un: Pond bass hit olive diver.

Multiple hooks, bobbers, split shot, and other junk on a light rod makes me more frustrated than happy. Oh, and most of all, I don't like wearing waders.

Florida has been life changing for my fishing experiences and I cannot say it enough that I am grateful every day for it. Why? Streamers! Baitfish patterns. REAL topwater. Double Haul. Shooting Line. All the fun stuff. I love sight fishing and stripping in a fun bait pattern. Who needs bugs?

During this time of stay at home mental chaos, fishing has brought me peace of mind, exercise, and a major mental challenge...(darn Tarpon)

I am also incredibly grateful for my wife encouraging me to join SFF. I have made some good friends that I would have never made before and look forward to meeting new ones. Even though my work is deemed essential, I have found fishing to be essential for my own health and sanity.

I've misplaced many flies lately so if you find one in a tarpon's mouth, I would love to have them back.

Strip.Strip.Strip!—Tim

Robert Fischer: Part 2: Fly Fishing in the Time of Corona

(Part 1 of Robert's adventure is in the [April issue](#) of *On The Fly*)



So, we made it to the mothership and continued our “Friday the 13th, start of a world pandemic, into a communist country, going to a remote island” trip. What could possibly happen? Well, for one thing the east wind blew about 15 to 20 mph the whole week. The island, Cayo Largo, is about 40 miles long and lies east to west so there were only a few places that we could go that weren't windy. This made the guide's jobs much harder but they did the best they could. Remember the casting clinics with Dayle Mazzarella and Pat Damico when they said to practice casting in the wind? How great that advice is. The wind also made the boat a little rocky and some folks felt queasy, but it just rocked me to sleep like my momma's rocking chair.

The next morning after a great breakfast the 10 of us (6 in our party and 4 from Colorado and Germany) loaded into Dolphin flats skiffs with Yamaha motors. The fishing was great. Wes, on his second bonefish trip ever, caught lots of fish in the 4 to 6 # range and a big snook. Bruce Anderson caught a 10# bonefish but didn't get any pictures (suspicious?), but the guide did say that it was the biggest bonefish he had ever gotten to the boat. Patty Anderson out-fished most of the guys on most of the days and that's not unusual for her. Guess that dispels the old sailor's myth that women are unlucky on boats! Walt Durkin got 3 tarpon bites on 3 casts, and landed a 20# one on the 3rd cast. Ted Hagaman got a nice tarpon also and a 20# permit, the only one of the trip. Ted got the slam. Congratulations.



Ted's tarpon

The other guys did pretty well also. In fact, Ralph, the guy from Germany, got his fourth super slam --bonefish, tarpon, permit and snook. And some weird stuff happened too. Wes had a fish run about 50' into his backing and the backing broke. Goodbye fly line. Then, 2 days later one of the guides found the line and fly, wound it up on a can and returned it to Wes. He was very surprised but gave the line to the guide as a memento. Also, I lost a tarpon when the nail knot stripped the coating off the fly line; that's never happened before. One guide told me that I couldn't use my 7wt because it was too light. And we needed to use 20# leader for the bonefish. I capitulated on the first day and used my 9wt but after that I used my 7wt with 12# and 16# leaders for the rest of the week. It worked fine and I didn't break off any flies. Hah.



Team TBFFC preps for another day of fishing the flats of Cayo Largo.

After each day of fishing we returned to the mothership and were greeted by hostess Yoah (Johanna) with ice cold moist towels on a silver platter to wipe our salty faces. And also by Ama (Amarinth) with a fresh mojito or daiquiri also on a platter. Then came the appetizers, fish fritters, calamari, etc. What a wonderful way to end a fishing day. I've tried to teach this skill to my wife but so far I'm not having much luck. Then there was time for a good hot shower before dinner. We often viewed the spectacular sunsets from the upper decks and thanks to Bruce and Patty's coaching I actually saw the green flash just as the sun

sank below the horizon. Always thought that was a myth.

In part 3 we'll talk about the fishing and the head-on boat crash.

Marshall Craig: How many did you catch?



Marshall Craig

Hint: It sort of depends on how you define "catch."

You have spent a day fishing the Bahamas flats. Washed up, sunburned, you gather with the guys for a pre-dinner Kalik. The question comes up: "How many did you catch?"

The answer presents a tricky ethical challenge as well as putting your manhood or womanhood on the line. The term "catch" can get slippery, on a par with "have sex" as in "I did not have sex with that woman." "Catch" can mean the fish actually getting into your hand or your guide's hand. But, if you expand the strike zone, so to speak, you could add a "quick release" to the definition of "catch." This leads to the question of whether a quick release has to occur only right next to your boat or your person if you are wading or can the definition be stretched a little farther afield, say, like during the bonefish's first run? Can the definition of "catch" cover the issue of a hook that, upon retrieval, turns out to be bent. You did the hard part; the hook blew it. Not your fault.

My definition of "catch" for purposes of retailing your day on the flats, drink in hand, during the evening debriefing: "Catch" equals

- Fish actually in hand, *plus*
- Fish not brought to hand because apex predator intervened, the bone becoming a tapas for shark or barracuda, *plus*
- Fish released prematurely because of bent hook – clearly not in my control, *plus*
- Fish released prematurely because of act of God, mysterious failure of surgeon's knot or clinch knot

Once we get past the number of fish you caught, there is the question of the size of the ones you caught. This is easier to deal with. Rule of thumb: guide's estimate plus a pound. Three pounder equals four pounds, etc. Aside from the number and weight of the fish you caught, there is art to the telling of the tale. You wait until several guys have weighed in, then casually offer numbers slipping in a notch below the highest offered to that point, plus a footnote. "Well, Steve's eleven has me beat. I only caught ten, several over six pounds, but I had bad luck." They ask, "What happened?" You answer, "Well, coral cut my line twice when I had one on, each easily ten pounds." This statement is unverifiable, while being plausible, a subset of "The dog ate my homework." It is particularly effective if you have been wading and your partner has been distracted, off to the side, getting instructions from the guide on how to cast into the wind.

"How many did you catch?" you ask me. I say "Well, let me think"

Marshall...The Old Road Peddler

This an excerpt from Suncoast Fly Fisher Marshall Craig's terrific paperback – **You'll Need a Guide: Fishing Stories that aren't Much About the Fish**. It's available on his website, craigit.life

Ray Smith: Harassment on the Water

Don't feed the cormorants

Ann and I are well and playing safe and planning to return to RI around the end of May after a reduction of travel restrictions in some states.

Ann and I spent time social distancing in our yaks at Shell Key Preserve near Fort DeSoto a couple of times in the last few weeks. I played catch and release with a number of trout and pinfish on my 6-wt rod using a modified Schminnow; bead chain, Estaz Grande UV, and ostrich herl tied in white. I experienced continuous harassment during both outings from very aggressive cormorants that targeted us swimming around and under the kayaks looking for a free lunch!



That cormorant will eat this seatrout.

Looks like they've learned about stealing hooked fish. One of the first fish I hooked was a trout around 15" that put up a hard fight as it got closer to the kayak, and when it surfaced it was in the mouth of a cormorant! I managed to get the trout in the net and left him in the water and moved away from that fish stealer. I successfully released him only to have the cormorant surface a few seconds later with it in its mouth! Only took him a few seconds to turn it around and gulp it down head first. I suspect that the overly intelligent bird must have stalked directly behind me out of my range of vision, arrrrggghhhh! From then on I kept any hooked fish in the water and moved much farther away from any of those damn birds before releasing and kept a closer eye on my six!



Ray's white schminnow was a winner.

Ray

Tony Piazza: Sight fishing snook is fun

I have been getting out a lot the past two weeks, walking the beach from Pass a Grille from 1st Ave to 20th Ave. I see snook almost every time but haven't had a hook up last 3 times out. I wet waded Pinellas Point once with no hits. At Dennis Marquis' suggestion I wet waded the inside of Shell Key and saw several snook. I cast to three and caught one about 20" on a flat in a foot of water. I am doing more sight fishing which is a lot of fun and easier on the arm. I have not stayed here in May before, so I am experiencing something positive from the Covid 19 stay home order. May fishing is completely different.

Tony

Tim Elms: Accidents Happen



No thanks, bluegill

Long story; short ending. This is why we shouldn't use pliers with cutters when fly fishing. I caught a blue gill on a bass popper. The popper was just as big as his mouth. With the wind blowing and fly line spinning; I grabbed my faithful pliers and grabbed the popper. Only when I clamped down the other side had my fly line in the cutters..... I didn't cut it near the head of the line. No. I cut it 40 feet into the belly. So long \$120.

Tim

Robert Fischer: Deep Seatrout at Anclote Key

I found a mess of seatrout in the deeper flats off Anclote Key. The water was 3 1/2 to 6' feet deep so it took a sink tip line and lead eyed Clousers. Grey over pink and also some brown and gold worked best.

Robert

Capt. Pat Damico: Captain's Corner



Fly Reel Do's and Don'ts

Fly reels in freshwater are generally thought of as a place to store fly line. It is rare that the backing is even seen. In saltwater, your first trip might include a large jack, snook or even ladyfish that will have you into the backing in seconds. Take some necessary steps to avoid any problems that can happen very quickly. Don't knock the reel against rocks, boat decks, hard floors, etc. Small scratches and dents expose bare metal which will easily corrode. On a boat always place the rod butt (and reel) on a damp cloth, so it will not slide and scratch, or get a reel cover if not supplied with your reel. Flats boats have 6 or 8 horizontal rod holders under the gunnels that afford perfect protection for both rod and reel. Never drop the reel in the sand, especially when stringing your rod. When

taking a picture in the water with your catch, avoid having your reel on the sandy bottom at your feet. Placing a reel in your hat if it must be on the ground is a good idea. Sand grains are very hard and can scratch the inner housing, causing damage to disk drags and even ball bearings. A ball bearing housing is made from stainless steel, the balls themselves are not. A corroded ball bearing will heat up and seize in the middle of the fight with your fish of a lifetime. Immediately after fishing, rinse the reel with a soft freshwater spray or spigot. Remove the spool, shake off excess water, and leave it to dry before reassembling. Ideally, after a saltwater fishing trip, and before putting the reel away for a long period, give it an in-depth cleaning. Remove the fly line and backing, scrub carefully with hot soapy water to remove salt crystals, rinse and dry with a clean cloth. It is never a good idea to soak a fly reel for long periods. The freshwater will not dislodge salt trapped in the tightly wound backing. Water will also penetrate the ball bearings and cause rust. Soaking can also distort the cork drag plates and prevent the drag from working smoothly. Make sure your reel is designed to not use internal grease or lubricant. When applicable, apply new grease and lubricate according to the manufacturer's instructions. Apply a light coating of oil to all exterior surfaces. Total reel maintenance will vary with use. Sending it to the manufacturer may be necessary if you can't resolve a problem.

Tie up some fly leaders

Use some downtime to examine and maintain fly fishing equipment. All fly fishers use a clear monofilament tapered leader that attaches to the heavier fly line and eventually the fly. Saltwater leaders are commercially available but they are easily made when you understand some basic principles. Keeping it very simple, my basic leader starts with a 4-foot butt section of 40-pound test, 2 feet of 30-pound test for the mid-section and 2 feet of 20-pound test for the tippet that attaches to the fly. Purchase a spool of each at any tackle store in a name brand that is clear and of medium flexibility. Use the same brand for all components. Use a double surgeon's knot or blood knot for the connections. Moisten each knot before closing with constant steady pressure and trim any excess near the knot. You now have a basic leader 8 feet in length. Wrap each one around your fingers to make it look like commercial ones and tuck the butt section under a few times. Store each in a small plastic sealable bag that is readily available. A lighter tippet can be added for clear water and spooky fish. A heavier, hard monofilament leader or fluorocarbon tippet can be added to resist abrasion from toothy predators. A carefully tied loop knot on hooks with straight eyes will give the fly more action and appeal.

Fly fisherman Pat Damico charts Fly Guy in lower Tampa Bay and can be reached at captpatdamico.com and (727) 504-8649

Fly Gear for Sale or Swap

Ocean kayak and extras from Frank Moss. Call and leave a message: 727-421-5354

Ocean Kayak, sit on top Prowler 15'. Extras include a paddle with tether, roof top car carrier, 6 plugs, sea anchor and lead anchor, two fly rod holders, one spinning rod holder, stick-it anchor pole, ceiling hoist, beach launch wheels, several nylon lines, a fly fishing vest. \$1,500.

Larry Lurie is selling his 16-foot Bass Tracker and trailer. Just \$4800. Email him at

lawrencelurie@gmail.com

Equipped with a 40 HP Mercury. Walk through Bimini top; Minn Kota Power Drive Copilot 55-lb thrust trolling motor. Lowrance color fish finder/GPS. Shortwave radio w/marine band, NOAA weather. Stereo AM/FM/W-CD. Boat cover; Minn Kota electric winch; 22-gal aerated bait tank; two 6 gallon gas tanks w/ tank switch; two new deep-cycle batteries; built in charger w/switch to run on either battery or both. PayPal.



Tim Elms is looking for a flats boat push pole and a trolling motor with remote.

Email Tim at trelms@yahoo.com

Bruce Evensen made these beautiful items himself. Call him at 727-403-9010. Also, see much more of his fine art on "Poppa Bruces Flies" pages on Etsy<https://www.etsy.com/shop/poppabrucesflies>

- Hook or eyes holder hand made by Bruce Evensen, \$28.00
- Thread holder with one fly holder by Bruce Evensen, \$9.00
- Fly tying desk and tool holder, \$50.00
- Fly tying desk and tool holder made by Bruce 2ftx2Fort, \$85.00
- Epoxy glue holder hand-made by Bruce Evensen, \$24.00

UPDATED: Lynn Skipper has two nice fly rods he'd like to sell. He can bring them to the next meeting. Email vintagevette@msn.com or call 813-541-3195)

- ROSS FLY STIK HEAVY 10 wt 7'11" 4 piece with tube. Ideal rod for those night trips after snook under the docks where you need to horse them away from the dock quickly. Originally \$200, now \$100. Barely used with no nicks, blemishes etc.
- ORVIS TLS Power Matrix 4 piece 3 wt 8'4" Midflex with case. Originally \$175, now \$100.
- Orvis Battenkill ¾ wt reel with backing and 3 wt WFF line. Used one trip to Montana last year. Originally \$125, now \$75 OBO.

Want to sell or trade? Need some fly gear? Email [Bill AuCoin, wmaucoin@verizon.net](mailto:wmaucoin@verizon.net)

Bill Scarola and friends: Drum Rolls Please

A pirate walks into a pub with a paper towel on his head.

The barkeep asks, why the paper towel?

The pirate answers " ARG, THAR BE A BOUNTY ON ME EDD!" **Padump Bump Ching**

Bill AuCoin : Flyfisher Flyover



Attn: wet waders. Our favorite wet wading waters remain free of bad bacteria but keep an eye on these weekly reports. As the water warms the bad stuff becomes more likely. Okay, it's not only wet waders who need to be careful, it's all of us who get our hands wet unhooking fish or whatever. ([Florida Healthy Beaches](#))

The red tide really took a toll on our inshore fishes. Catch and release remains for another year, until May 31, 2021. Seatrout, redfish, and snook must be released so the gulf and bay can recover from the horrific red tide we had in 2019. This applies to the waters of Southwest Florida between the Hernando/Pasco county line and Gordon Pass in Collier County. Snook will remain catch and release until September 1, 2021. Maybe a permanent catch-and-release regulation for seatrout would be a good thing. Great for catching; but not good for keeping. ([My FWC](#))

Forty years ago. On May 8, 1980 a freighter went sideways in strong winds and struck the Sunshine Skyway Bridge. We'll remember. ([Tampa Bay Times](#))

Hidden Rivers of Southern Appalachia. This is a short version of a film that was ten years in the making. It follows the work of biologists and explorers and reveals their beauty and also the vulnerability. H/T. Pat Damico. ([Freshwaters Illustrated](#))

Keep your eye on the ball. I hope this coronavirus pandemic doesn't distract Florida decision makers from solving the blue-green algae problem. ([Angler's Journal](#))

When and how did saltwater fly fishing become a thing? And who made it a thing? Watch this video. You'll see the Flip Pallot, Chico Fernandez, Lefty Kreh, Stu Apte, Nat Ragland, John Wulff, Nick Curcione, Mark Sosin, and Bill Curtis talk about the early days of saltwater fly fishing in America. In Florida, really. ([American Museum of Fly Fishing](#))

The tug is the drug – SFF member Chris O'Byrne has a blog. He keeps it up to date with good stuff including how to practice becoming a better fly caster. And there's a lot more. ([Featherwater](#))

Very good advice -- Seven tips for fly fishing from a kayak. Here's one. Fight the fish on the reel. ([The Fly Fishing Basics](#))

More good advice – This article is more than a year old but it is, as they say, evergreen. ([Fly Fisherman](#))

I have a metaphysical question. For the June docklight outing, do bridge lights qualify? This article is about nighttime fishing for huge redfish on a Pensacola bridge but Tampa Bay bridges all offer the same opportunities for big fish. Yes, including tarpon. It's cooler at night, too. ([On The Fly South](#))

Is fly fishing essential for mental health? Could be. I'm so glad I'm a fisherman and not, for example, a basketball player. It's safer and practically synonymous with social distancing. h/t Pat Damico ([Oregon Fly Fishing](#))

Thanks, Jack. This is the first time I've ever out-fished my fishing buddy on the fly. One day last week I caught one smallish snook. That's all. He caught nothing even though he was casting hard lures. The winning fly was this one tied by member Jack Collins. We both agreed, big eyes are the secret.



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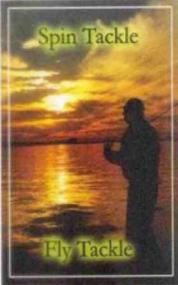
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