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16th Annual

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Cover photo: Bonefish are a tropical species often reaching 20 pounds in their more southern environments, but in the Gulf of Mexico anything over 8 pounds is exceptional. Read about fishing the Gulf Coast on page 20. Photo by Tosh Brown

This page: Author Bill Toone shows off a baby tarpon, one of many Little Cayman Island treasures. See story on page 24. Photo courtesy Bill Toone
On Saturday night after the 50th International Fly Fishing Fair in Bend, Oregon, I dialed the operator at the Riverhouse Hotel & Convention Center for a 5 a.m. wake-up call so I could get an early start on the five-hour trip down Highway 89 to my home in Redding, California. I enjoyed the early-morning drive while passing many trees and lakes as the rising sun accented the start of a new day. I have to admit I had a smile on my face all the way home.

The scenery was not the only thing bringing a smile to my face as I remembered the officers’ meeting back in 2008 where I was elected the temporary chairman of the board. The purpose of that meeting was to decide if the organization was worth saving. Obviously we made the right decision to save it based on today’s solid financial footing and its strong organizational direction. I think the IFFF was worth all the hard work. Many members attending “the Fair” told me they thought this was the best, most memorable fly fishing event they had attended.

I’m pleased people liked the show because we’ve been working on it for the last five years. When I say “we” I don’t mean myself; I mean the Livingston staff led by Rhonda Sellers and the many volunteers who were instrumental in the event’s success. On a personal note, I want to thank everyone involved including the staff, volunteers, vendors, casters, tiers, presenters, officers and membership.

The IFFF Board of Directors, the Casting Board of Governors and the Fly Tying Board of Governors meetings were all well attended and successful. I think the organization has come a long way, thanks to people like Carl Zarelli, Dr. Rick Williams and Treasurer Ron Winn. I really appreciate the good advice and thoughts of people like Bob Jacklin, Bruce Richards, Jim Schramm, Al Beatty, Keith Groty, Herb Kettler, Frank Johnson, Bud Frasca, the council presidents and anyone I may have inadvertently forgotten.
Over the years I have found that often something worth working on is put right in front of you, dropped in your lap, so to speak. What I am talking about in this situation is an article that appeared in a recent Roseburg, Oregon, newspaper. It focused on the state's two senators presenting a bill to the U.S. Congress that eventually established a new 100,104-acre sanctuary at the headwaters of the Umpqua River. The Frank and Jeanne Moore Steelhead Sanctuary was formed with land donated by the U.S. Forest Service in recognition of their lifelong dedication to the upper Umpqua River and the preservation of its steelhead population.

Understanding their importance and dedication to this fishery, I thought it was important the Federation create a new award recognizing them for their lifetime of hard work. The Frank and Jeanne Moore Award is that recognition.

The nominee for the award should be an individual that has made an extraordinary contribution to the conservation of our fisheries resources and a notable contribution to community service. It can be based upon a single outstanding contribution or on a continuous prominent effort promoting conservation. It need not be an annual award but should only be given on a case-by-case basis to a recipient who may or may not be affiliated with the Federation.
Just Fishing

Philip Greenlee with Frank and Jeanne Moore being recognized for a lifetime of dedication to fisheries conservation.
The first recipient of this award is Nathaniel P. Reed, whose heritage dates back to Lewis and Clark. As assistant secretary of the interior with the Nixon and Ford administrations, he was involved in the preservation or expansion of parks in Alaska, Montana (Yellowstone) and Florida. He has also been a lifelong friend of Frank and Jean Moore, helping them with their efforts on the preservation of the Umpqua River. If you are interested you can Google “Nathaniel P. Reed, the Backbone of Florida Environmentalism” to learn of his conservation efforts spanning more than 50 years. I think it's amazing to learn what one person can accomplish if they set their mind to the task. We were very honored to have him speak at the 50th Anniversary Awards Banquet in Bend.

If I sound like I’m proud of the organization I’ve been part of for almost five decades, it’s because I am. The 50th Anniversary Fly Fishing Fair was a very special event for me and for many others based on comments I received at the show. If you were there you know what I mean, and if you were not then review the Home Waters section of this magazine to get an idea of the scope of the event. A good time was had by all.

I’ll close for now and plan on seeing all of you at Park High School in Livingston, Montana, next August 2-6 for the 2016 show. For more information you can check out FedFlyFishers.org/FlyFishingFair/tabid/298
THE FEDERATION, THE FUTURE

By Len Zickler

“If you don’t know where you’re going, you’re going to end up someplace else.” – Yogi Berra

I love baseball. And I love Yogi Berra quotes! I also love fly angling!

The International Federation of Fly Fishers has been my connection to the fly angling world. It is the vehicle I have used in my quest for improved angling, better casting and participation in the conservation of important water resources required for a quality angling experience. The Federation has been the tie between my professional life as an environmental planner and my sporting life as a fly angler. The quest to be a better angler is what drew me to the Federation and ultimately to a leadership position with the board of directors.

Phil Greenlee approached me the fall of 2013 and asked if I would be willing to participate on an Executive Director Search Committee. Phil had just announced his intended retirement in 2016. I was flattered and humbled by Phil’s invitation and agreed without hesitation to serve. Little did I know how much work would be required. The committee set out in early 2014 to start the executive director search process. Thanks to Phil’s leadership, we have realized financial stability and once again operate on a strong foundation. However, this is when the Yogi Berra quote revealed particular relevance. It was clear to the committee, while the Federation was once again financially stable, it had no strategic plan to guide the organization.

Our leadership is characterized by many successful business and government leaders, all of whom recognize without a plan it’s hard to make positive progress and realize a unified direction.

The Federation has demonstrated, even without a clear and unified direction, it can make a positive difference in the angling world. Our casting and tying programs are world class and unparalleled! The work of our councils and clubs across the United States and the world are excellent! This is all good news.

However, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence the Federation is losing touch with its membership and the fly angling industry. For example, during the recent election for the board of directors, we
received comments from members indicating an unwillingness to participate in the election because there were no women identified for board positions. At least one commentator indicated he was leaving the Federation because of our failure to identify qualified women for board positions.

Some suggest we are an organization primarily consisting of old, white males whose primary purpose is to give each other awards. Some call us arrogant elitists and exclusive. These are a couple examples of how the Federation is viewed. These are perceptions we must address and change! Further there is no excuse for not having a strong representation of women on our board. We have many qualified women in our ranks who would be more than willing to give of their time and resources.

Regarding the strategic plan, there have been many attempts in the past to initiate a strategic planning process for the Federation. However, they were abandoned due to a lack of continuity in leadership and/or a lack of understanding, interest and commitment. The organization’s commitment to the membership today is to not allow this to happen again.

Imagine what it would be like if we fully understood who we are as an organization, the character of the fly angling community and were unified by a clear direction, vision and purpose? As a foundation for the executive director search process, the committee set out to accomplish this objective, and I believe we have laid the foundation for the future of the Federation. Our effort included an examination of the 2010 IFFF strategic plan. Even though a great deal of work went into the 2010 plan, there was no budget attached to it and...

At the request of many fellow fly tiers, Dena and Jerome Hebert created this book. It contains over 50 different fly tying techniques and step-by-step photos with instructions for tying over a dozen fly patterns. Jerome developed and used these patterns as a fly fishing guide pursuing bass, crappie, and large bluegill, in 1995-2005.

Books are available at AbayuRunsThrougHtlt.com 337-356-2991
therefore, it was not implemented. A strategic planning committee was formed, including representatives from the council presidents, board of directors, and from casting, fly tying and conservation. We convened in Denver, Colorado, this spring to begin the work of preparing the plan.

We left Denver with an updated mission and vision statement and a recommitment to our core values. Simply stated, the Federation is the only outdoor sports organization entirely focused on the fly angling community. We are the “One Stop Shop for Everything Fly Angling!”

Our historical roots are in conservation through fly angling. As Lee Wulff once suggested, the more people we introduce to fly angling, the more advocates for conservation we create. We rededicate ourselves to our conservation roots and environmental ethic. Further, our educational offerings in fly casting and fly tying are world class and unparalleled! We are the only outdoor sports organization dedicated to a full range of fly angling educational offerings.

Regarding our mission and vision, as Norman Maclean’s father suggested to him in “A River Runs Through It,” “Write it again, half as long.” Therefore, restated, the mission of the Federation is: To support, enhance and preserve fly fishing opportunities. Fundamental to this mission is environmental stewardship and education.

The strategic vision is:
At its core, the Federation is the only nonprofit, outdoor sports organization exclusively representing fly fishing for all fish in all waters. Our core connection vehicle is education. We strive to be world-class educators in four areas: casting, fly tying, fly fishing skills and conservation.

In advance of Denver, we spent some time examining existing reports on the status of fishing and fly fishing across the United States. What we learned should be transformational for our organization. Close to 50 million people fish in the United States

We are excited to announce Molly Semenik’s appointment to the International Federation of Fly Fishers Board of Directors and Chairman of the Board Committee. “Molly’s appointment is consistent with our desire to broaden the perspective of the board. She has agreed to assist with the oversight of the new Fly Fishing Academy,” said Len Zickler, committee spokesman. More information about the new academy will be forthcoming in the Spring/Summer 2016 issue of Flyfisher.
and about 4 million people identify themselves as fly anglers. Of the fly angling population, 40 percent are women, and a strong majority are under the age of 40. These demographics are not representative of the Federation. Less than 10 percent of our members are women, and the vast majority of our members are over the age of 50.

The approximately 11,500 current members of the Federation represent less than 0.3 percent of the total population identifying themselves as fly anglers. Further, the Federation is about one-twelfth the size of Trout Unlimited. Don't get me wrong, our current membership, even though relatively small, is strong and has done a great job moving our organization forward. However, we are not growing, and recently we have experienced a slight decline in membership. The good news is there is tremendous room for membership growth. Our goal is to triple membership of the Federation over the next five years. We do need to be smart about this growth and ensure our ability to serve our membership well.

It's obvious if we want to stay relevant to the fly angling community, we need to redouble our efforts to attract more women and younger anglers to our organization. To accomplish this, our methods and communication approach must change. We need women leading women’s programs. And we need to find new, innovative ways to engage younger anglers with the Federation. We know young people prefer to “experience” the range of outdoor activities including fly angling. We know they are not much into attending meetings. They want to be out on the water!

Moving forward, we will be encouraging the Federation, councils and clubs to offer more
experiential opportunities for both women and younger fly anglers. The primary delivery vehicle we intend to use to serve and expand the diversity of our membership will be the Fly Fishing Academy. While we have not settled on this name, there was strong agreement for the development of a fly angling school consisting of world-class education material and methods in the four areas – casting, fly tying, conservation and fly fishing skills. This will represent the future of the Federation.

Operational efficiency will be an important focus of our strategic initiatives as we move forward. This fall we begin the process of tying the strategic plan to the budget. A primary objective of this effort will be to ensure all of our delivery programs are budgeted and we work toward “black ink” in all program areas, across the board. Finally, as suggested by some board members early on in the executive director search process, we will use the strategic plan initiatives as the foundation for the new executive director. Coming to this new position, the executive director will have strong guidance, evidenced by unanimous approval of the board of directors for the strategic vision. The executive director will play an important role in adding detail and personality to the strategic plan and in the identification of key performance indicators. We know at the outset some of the key indicators will include membership growth, financial growth and profitability.

Moving forward, the board of directors will play an important role in establishing the direction for the Federation and evaluating the performance of the executive director on a frequent and ongoing basis. I want to personally thank the board of directors for their support of our mission, vision and strategic direction. With your support and cooperation, I’m confident the roadmap we’ve laid out will give us a terrific direction for “The Future – The Federation.”

Len Zickler is from Spokane, Washington, and is a member and spokesman of the IFFF Chairman of the Board Committee.
Anywhere fly fishers have an interest, the IFFF can and does play a role. Join others who are dedicated to the betterment of the sport of fly fishing – Join the IFFF.

The International Federation of Fly Fishers

SWEETGRASS RODS, THOMAS & THOMAS, ABEL REELS AND IFFF ARE TEAMING UP to celebrate the organization’s 50th anniversary with a Special Rod/Reel extravaganza! The rods are top-of-the-line pieces of beauty any fly fisher would be proud to own. The Sweetgrass Rod is a five-sided bamboo; the trout and saltwater rods are the best Thomas & Thomas has to offer; and the Abel Reels are their Super 4N and Super 7/8N models. All bamboo rods or rod/reel combinations are limited in availability and will be allotted on a first-come, first-served basis. Net proceeds will help fund the IFFF Conservation and Education programs.

www.fedflyfishers.org/store.aspx

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JOIN BY SENDING IN THE FORM ABOVE OR ONLINE AT www.fedflyfishers.org
406-222-9369
I Am a Member

CHET AND PAT SMITH

Residence  Mountain Home, Arkansas

IFFF Council  Southern

Member since  1985

Home waters  Our home waters are the White River in north central Arkansas. We have an abundance of beautiful streams in our area: The White River (trout), The North Fork of the White (trout), Crooked Creek (blue ribbon smallmouth), Spring River (trout) and the Buffalo River (many warmwater species).

Favorite fish  Pat: I grew up fishing with my dad all around central Arkansas. We fished for just about every warmwater species you can imagine. Since moving to the Ozarks, trout seems to be the fish of the day, but I still enjoy fishing for bluegill, bream and other small panfish, Chet: Bluegill.

Memorable fishing experience  Chet: My most memorable experience was fishing in southern Wyoming on an unnamed stream where I caught native brook trout that were no more than 6 inches in length. That is a big change from the trophy trout on the White River in my part of the world.

Pat: Don’t laugh at this. Growing up, one of my favorite places to fish was on my uncle’s rice farm in the Cache River Basin. He had a small lake that supplied the water for the rice fields, and there was a dredge ditch that ran alongside the lake to take the overflow to the Cache River.

There I fished for grinnell, or what is commonly called a bowfin. It’s a big, prehistoric fish with lots of teeth! It’s been many, many years since I last had the opportunity to catch one. Back then they were big, mean and liked to chew up the line.

Reason for being a member  When Chet got involved in fly fishing back in the mid-'80s, we joined Ozark Fly Fishers (OFF), encouraged by several friends who were members. Pat then took casting lessons from the guy who hooked Chet! John Hawkins had a fly shop in one of the St. Louis suburbs and contributed a lot to our fishing education. Once we joined OFF, the next step was the FFF.
We started attending the Southern Council Conclaves and getting more involved. The logical next step was life memberships in the IFFF to support our sport. The IFFF is the only organization for the fly fisherman fishing in all waters for all species.

What others say  Southern Council President Larry Wegmann said: “Pat and Chet Smith have been integral in the development of Southern Council Conclaves. Pat retired from the position of business manager of the Southern Council and took up the organizational post of fly tying chair for the Sowbug Roundup in Mountain Home, Arkansas. Their efforts have helped make the Ozarks a destination for tiers and fly fishermen.”

Editor’s note: We are sorry to announce Chet Smith passed away August 30, 2015. He was a special person who will be missed!

Hooked on Fly Fishing from A to Z

Beverly Vidrine

“Hooked on Fly Fishing from A to Z” is a wonderful introduction to the world of fly fishing. Often seen as complex or intimidating, this graceful form of fishing is anything but, and this book shows young readers just how easy it can be. Broken down into simple-to-understand pieces, children can quickly connect the dots on how to get started in this amazing sport, literally from A to Z.

Does your council or club have an individual you would like to be considered for a future “I Am a Member” Profile? If so, please e-mail Bill Toone, Flyfisher Editor-in-Chief, at btoone@3riversdbs.net with your consideration. Please include a brief bio (25 to 40 words) along with the reason you feel this person exemplifies the best of the Federation of Fly Fishers.
There is nothing brighter than the smile of a child who has just caught his/her first fish. Volunteers from the High Plains Drifters (HPD), an IFFF charter club in the Denver area, see beaming children like this twice a year through an event they call Kids’ Day.

The first Kids’ Day was held July 7, 2003, when 19 kids and their parents were introduced to the sport of fly fishing. HPD had long been pursuing the next generation of fly fishers and, with a lot of work, the event was a huge success.

Twelve years later an average of 25 volunteers mentor children in what is hoped will develop into a lifelong love of catch-and-release fishing and a devotion to community service. High Plains Drifters recently completed its second Kids’ Day event of 2015 with a record 43 kids, including youngsters from the Children’s Diabetes Foundation, a group the club has hosted multiple times. HPD has hosted more than 400 children in the 13 years this flagship program has been taking place. It has allowed many children and parents to experience their first time around water in a safe and nurturing environment.

Boys and girls ages 5 to 18 receive far more than a chance to catch a fish! Each Kids’ Day starts with an introduction to the fundamentals of fly fishing: bugs, fishing equipment and knot tying. Then each child has the opportunity to tie several flies that are later used on the water. Patient HPD volunteers work one-on-one with these youngsters to ensure they safely handle the flies while learning a fun side of...
Casting instructions are held in wide-open areas where instructors teach in small groups. Through a great partnership with the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, fly rods, reels, tippet and dozens of flies are provided at each event.

Of course, a day long fly fishing outing means gathering around the grill for hot dogs and hamburgers and to talk about all of the new experiences. At the last event, volunteer grill masters served 110 people counting kids, parents and volunteers.

Lunch is followed by time on the water. As they say, they call this fishing and not catching, so a few don't have the chance to have a fish netted. But young ones seem to have as much fun just being outside.

Charter members of the International Federation of Fly Fishers commonly have a community-minded purpose. As a proud IFFF member, HPD will continue working to nurture youngsters who can, in turn, pass along the fine tradition of fly fishing.

Besides the primary benefit of exposing children to the joy of fly fishing, a secondary benefit includes the fact that many of the parents express interest in joining HPD. What a wonderful tradition our fly fishing club may have initiated for many families in attendance at this clinic – fly fishing as a family sport – a tradition worthy of passing down to the following generations.

PHOTO BY JOSH VELLA

FLYFISHER Autumn 2015 - Winter-2016
Four members from the Clearwater Fly Casters spent July 12-18, 2014, taking a 1,610-mile trip to successfully complete the Cuttcatch Challenge for them all, according to Senior Conservation Adviser Rick Williams. Those Idaho fly fishers are Cliff Swanson and Marc Ratzlaff from Troy and Paul Agidius and Steve Bush from Moscow.

The four traveled from central Idaho to Bear Lake, sampling bodies of water along the way. The trip took them through Idaho, Montana and Wyoming; their goal was to complete the Cuttcatch Challenge. They fished numerous waters including the Lochsa River (tributary to the Clearwater River) to catch westslope subspecies of cutthroat, Saint Charles Creek (tributary to Bear Lake) to catch Bonneville subspecies of cutthroat, McCoy Creek (tributary to Palisades Reservoir) to catch fine spotted Snake River subspecies of cutthroat, and Bitch Creek (tributary to the Teton River) to catch the Yellowstone subspecies of cutthroat. They reported that all fish were photographed and released unharmed following the IFFF suggested catch-and-release guidelines.

Swanson sent us his announcement several months before his buddies “got around to the paperwork” so we’ll feature his results first. He managed to capture four subspecies of cutthroat trout and even exceeded the requirements because he also caught a nice Lahontan on Nevada’s Pyramid Lake in March 2011, but it’s not part of this story. Swanson caught his first and second fish on a Parachute Adams and his last two on Stimulators. He commented, “The cutthroat on the Lochsa River were really crazy for that Stimulator when we were there!” For those of you who don’t know, the Lochsa River is one of the tributaries of Idaho’s famous Clearwater River, an excellent steelhead and salmon fishery. For Agidius the Lochsa River was really good to him, and the Purple
Haze was even better as it tricked one of the larger cutthroat caught on the trip, a 15-inch westslope. In fact he caught ALL of his fish on this fun pattern. For those of you not familiar with the “Haze,” it is a dry fly popular in the West. The pattern is basically a Parachute Adams with a purple body. Bush used a range of patterns to fulfill his Cuttcatch Challenge. Those flies included a Renegade, Adams and an Irresistible. His largest fish was also a westslope caught on the Lochsa River, and for him the Irresistible lived up to its name by bringing a fish to hand that matched the other 15-inch fish on the trip caught by Agidius.

Ratzlaff’s largest fish of the trip was also a westslope cutthroat (14 inches) taken from the Lochsa River on a Royal Wulff. He thought all of the waters were fun but did comment about one of the bodies of water they explored when he told us, “There is a reason they call the stream Bitch Creek!” He indicated that walking along that stream was difficult, but it did give him one of the nicer Yellowstone cutthroat caught on the trip. His 10-inch fish fell for a Stimulator, but Agidius’ Purple Haze bested him a bit with a 12-inch fish. It does seem the Purple Haze was very kind to Agidius on that trip. Maybe it will treat all of you as well when you give it a try.

These four gentlemen captured their Cuttcatch Challenge Award in their home state only taking one week to accomplish the goal. What about all of you reading this announcement? Are you up to the challenge?
HELP THE FEDERATION SAVE BY GOING ONLINE!

By Jeff Wagner

The International Federation of Fly Fishers (IFFF) has a responsibility to be a leader in the area of conservation. As the educational arm of the fly fishing industry, what we do is as important as what we say. We must not allow our organization to be complacent, but instead must continually strive for the next level. That is why we will be looking for improvements in how we operate with a continual eye for conservation. This will include efforts on how to reduce paper use, reduce plastic water bottle use, and in general be more sustainable.

Our next step is to strive toward a dramatic reduction in paper. One of the major areas of waste for the Federation is paper mailings for membership renewal and casting certification renewal. We have an opportunity to make a real change – a change that will improve our environment and our bottom line. This is a real-world example of how green policy is not only good for the environment but also good for business. Annually we spend tens of thousands of dollars on postage and mailings. Our members have grown to expect that letter in the mail asking them to renew.

Moving forward we will first send an e-mail asking you to renew online and would request that you use this option whenever possible. Not only will you be reducing paper waste, you will be saving yourself and the IFFF time, as well as making a significant impact on funds we have available. Save money! Use e-mail and pay online!

Jeff Wagner is from Sidney, Nebraska, and works for Cabela’s. He is board co-chair of the IFFF Executive Committee.
In June 2016, fly tiers will experience Atlantic Salmon Fly International (ASFI) Part II, the sequel exposition to an event that was like no other. Hosted by the Northwest Atlantic Salmon Fly Guild (N WASFG) in the Seattle area, this event will continue the celebration of the passion and art of the Atlantic salmon fly. While the Internet allows virtual experiences, and books have tutorials, there is still no substitute for interpersonal learning!

To continue this celebration, the ASFI is assembling yet another exclusive, international list of 76 talented Atlantic salmon fly tiers and hook makers to demonstrate their skills. At this event the demonstrators will represent nearly 20 countries including Japan, Russia, North America and most of Europe. In order to maximize your learning experience, the event will span three days from June 3-5, 2016. Join us in Renton, Washington, to learn from the fly tying world’s best-of-the-best, connect with people, forge new relationships and be a part of salmon fly tying history. For more information visit asfi-expo.com.

Natalie Wells checks out a beautifully dressed Atlantic salmon fly at the ASFI Expo in Renton, Washington.
Who hasn’t planned a trip to some famous fishery and not wanted to know beforehand what killer flies to tie or buy? How about discovering popular patterns on waters that you fish regularly or for certain types of fishing such as spring creeks or tidal flats?

Fellow Federators, get ready for a wonderful opportunity to suggest and vote for fly patterns representing your favorite flies for freshwater and saltwater offerings. Beginning with this issue of Flyfisher, you will find a link to a survey in which we hope you will participate. This issue’s survey asks about your favorite Green Drake mayfly imitation; the results will be announced in the Spring-Summer 2016 issue.

A new survey and results of the previous survey will be announced in each future issue of Flyfisher. We would also ask for any of your favorite patterns in the survey so that some may be featured in the survey results.

We may ask your opinion regarding imitations of a certain type of insect or other prey species. Other times we may ask for a vote upon a favorite fly for a certain type of fishing situation or fish species. Also, as part of the survey, send us feedback as to what flies you may want to see featured in future surveys.
We will publish the results with At the Vise, a regular department in the magazine, with detailed step-by-step tying instructions of one of the flies featured in the survey, as well as photos and recipes for other top vote-getters.

The goal is to give members a unique opportunity to share some of their favorite flies and to highlight some oldies but goodies that are still being effectively used. In addition your feedback will give us a comprehensive database of flies and the regions where they are being used; this information may be utilized in future feature articles.

This addition to Flyfisher will also give many of you some new and effective patterns to try near where you fish; so get ready to share your opinions and favorite flies with fellow Federators in upcoming issues. Vote now at FavoriteFlySurvey.org.
ANNUAL MEETING
For North Eastern Council

By Bob Ford

The North Eastern Council (NEC) announced that its annual meeting will be Saturday, December 12, 2015, at 1 p.m. Eastern time. All NEC members are invited to attend this important meeting.

The main purpose is for the members to elect the board of directors. Also on the agenda is the vote by the board to elect the president, secretary and treasurer. There will also be a discussion of NEC goals for 2016 and committee assignments.

The meeting will be at the Bear’s Den Fly Fishing Shop on the second floor at 34 Robert W. Boyden Road, Taunton, Massachusetts 02780. The phone number is 508-977-0700. This is a good opportunity to meet other members and also learn about the various NEC activities that further the mission of the International Federation of Fly Fishers. For more information please contact Burr Tupper, council president, at 603-487-5498 or burrt@hotmail.com. You may also visit the NEC website at FedFlyFishersNec.org.

CASTING WITH A U.S. SENATOR
Senator Shaheen Gets a Casting Lesson

As a thank you for her support on environmental and conservation programs throughout her political career, North Eastern Council (NEC) President Burr Tupper and board of directors member Ron Sowa recently treated Sen. Jean Shaheen (D-New Hampshire) to a complimentary casting lesson. Even during her tenure as governor, she worked with then Sen. Judd Gregg (R-New Hampshire) to protect 171,000 acres comprising the Connecticut Lakes area and the trophy sections of the Connecticut River. This parcel abuts 148,000 acres of the 800,000-acre White Mountain National Forest. As governor she worked to establish the Shore Land Protection Act that helps preserve much of the state’s 17,000 miles of rivers and streams and more than 1,000 lakes and ponds.

The National Land and Water Conservation Fund was created in 1965 to protect lands, waterways, forests, state and local parks, and critical wildlife habitats. The fund also helps to ensure fishing access, trails, and outdoor recreation opportunities in every state. Unfortunately, the fund has been chronically underfunded because Congress siphons off nearly two-thirds of it.
Each year since she arrived in the Senate, Shaheen has led bipartisan efforts, along with Sen. Pat Leahy (D-Vermont), to persuade their fellow members of the Senate Appropriations Committee to provide full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund at the $900 million level. Those funds are derived from companies drilling offshore. She is also a cosponsor of bipartisan legislation that would permanently authorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund with dedicated funding.

The NEC urges other councils to work with senators to support the continuation of the Land and Conservation Fund. They believe casting lessons and fishing trips are good ways to pass along the IFFF conservation message while providing the politician a good photo opportunity as well. It’s a win-win for everyone and a fun time as well.

Information provided by Burr Tupper, NEC President.
MIKE’S BUCKET LIST

By James Ferguson

On August 12, 2015, Mike Keithley scratched two items off his bucket list. He had made it to the IFFF International Fly Fishing Fair in Bend, Oregon. A week or so beforehand, he had been fishing one of the waters in his home state of Colorado when he had a seizure and had to be airlifted to the hospital. His plans were now on hold, but as he explained to his doctor, he either wanted to be released or he would walk out. He wanted to be at the 50th anniversary celebration, he wanted to see his Oregon buddies, demo tie while sharing techniques of tying classic Irish trout patterns, and turn in his set of flies for the Bronze Award sponsored by the Fly Tying Group (FTG). Several seizures over the years were finally affecting his ability to manipulate the fingers.

Keithley had lived in Oregon and had developed and maintained the computer database for the tiers involved with the Oregon Fly Fishing and Tying Expo. His assistance was invaluable to the recordkeeping during those years. He even maintained that database after moving to Colorado. He tied at the show, got involved with Salmon Fly Saturday at Rich Youngers' fly shop in Salem, and developed an interest in teaching others the craft of quality fly tying. He developed an interest in Atlantic salmon, Irish trout and classic trout patterns. Last August, Keithley was excited about the FTG Tying Awards.
program and wanted to participate. It was a personal goal of his to complete the Bronze Award requirement. Keithley smiled as he scratched off the second item on that bucket list the night of August 12 when he handed me his set of Bronze Award flies. His subtle humor showed when we discussed the difficulty of his delivering these flies to me. He was sitting there with his oxygen mask and said, “Fly Tying isn’t a matter of life or death, it’s more important than that.” On the way to the convention center the next day, Keithley suffered a severe seizure and was taken to the hospital; relatives were called and flew out to be with him. He never regained consciousness and passed away August 14. His flies are in the process of being evaluated. He will be tying with many of us every time we sit down at the vise.

James Ferguson from Salem, Oregon, is the former chairperson of the FTG and a longtime Federator.
GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY FLY PLATE GOES TO JAPAN

By Sherry Steele

A n IFFF Golden Anniversary Fly Plate created by the members of the Central Oregon Fly Tyers Guild, a charter club based in Sisters, Oregon, sold as a fundraiser to Extreme Fishing Japan (KenCube.jp), the high bidder in the annual live auction at the 50th anniversary celebration, the 2015 International Fly Fishing Fair in Bend, Oregon.

Central Oregon Fly Tyers Guild President Sherry Steele and club members brainstormed options for this anniversary plate and decided that each member would tie a classic salmon fly (or variation) with the word “gold” in the fly’s name. Guild member Jim Fisher took fly framing to the next creative level when he designed and built the shadow box. He followed with more creativity by mounting the flies using internal LED illumination to backlight them and green felt to accent their beauty. The fly plate was simply stunning as you can see in the photo with this story.

“...go to Kenji Sugisaka, president of Extreme Fishing Japan,” said Steele. “It’s special to know our hard work found a good home where it will be appreciated.” This beautiful commemorative fly plate will be displayed in Extreme Fishing Japan’s fly shop in Aichi, Japan.

For more information or to join the Central Oregon Fly Tyers Guild, contact Sherry Steele at SteeleFly@msn.com.

Flies in the plate were tied by Jim Crislip (Golden Girl), Jim Ferguson (Gold Judge), Robert Wolin (Golden Demon), Valerie Anderson (Gold Finch), Richard Rohrbaugh (Goldie Hawn), John Kreft (Golden Butterfly; Mckay), Sherry Steele (Golden Shannon), Ron Bell (Golden Eagle) and Jim Fisher (Golden Butterfly; Traherne).
The following events offer IFFF Casting Instructor Certification. Pre-registration is required. Call 406-222-9369 to register. You must be a current IFFF member.

**November 24-30, 2015.**
Sweden's Thomas Berggren will test in Johannesburg (November 24-25), Durban (November 26-28) and Cape Town (November 29-30).

**January 29 - 30, 2016.**
The Fly Fishing Show, Somerset, New Jersey. See the online calendar for more info about the test offered at FedFlyFishers.org/Casting

**March 5-6, 2016.**
CI - Lancaster, Pennsylvania

**April 29, 2016.**
CI/MCI/THCI Test #1601 Ellensburg, Washington

**September 21-25, 2016.**
CI/MCI/THCI Test #0116 Wentworth Falls, Australia

**September 29 - October 1, 2016.**
CI/MCI/THCI Test #0216 Wanaka South Island, New Zealand

Casting test events are often scheduled with other IFFF events, so please check the IFFF Casting Testing Calendar for updates. FedFlyFishers.org/Casting

Continuing education classes for certified instructors are available and posted on the IFFF website.

For more information about all casting events, please visit: FedFlyFishers.org/Casting
January 2016

8-10 The Fly Fishing Show
Denver, Colorado
www.flyFishingShow.com

9-10 Western Idaho Fly Fishing Expo
Boise, Idaho
www.bvff.com

21-24 NCC teaches fly tying at the ISE Show in Sacramento, California

22-24 The Fly Fishing Show
Marlborough, Massachusetts
www.flyFishingShow.com

29-31 The Fly Fishing Show
Somerset, New Jersey
www.flyFishingShow.com

30 Northern Ohio Fly Fishing Expo
Brecksville, Ohio
www.ncff.net/expo2015.html

February 2016

5-6 The Fly Fishing Show
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
www.flyFishingShow.com

6 Greater Cincinnati Fly Fishing Show
Loveland, Ohio
buckeyeFlyFishers.com

13-14 The Fly Fishing Show
Lynnwood, Washington
www.flyFishingShow.com

26-27 The Fly Fishing Show
Pleasanton, California
www.flyFishingShow.com

27 30th Annual Acadiana Fly Rodders Conclave
Lafayette, Louisiana
www.acadianaFlyRodders.com
March 2016

5 Red River Fishing Expo
Natchitoches Event Center, Louisiana
www.redRiverFishingExpo.com

5-6 The Fly Fishing Show
Lancaster, Pennsylvania.
www.flyFishingShow.com

11-12 Northwest Fly Tyer & Fly Fishing Expo
Albany, Oregon.
www.nwExpo.com

12 25th Annual “Red Stick Day” Fly Fishing
Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
www.rsff.blogspot.com

20 Northern California Council Festival of Fly Fishing
San Rafael, California.
www.fedFlyFishers.org

April 2016

9-10 Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival
Doswell, Virginia.
www.vaFlyFishingFestival.com

29-30 Washington Fly Fishing Festival
Ellensburg, Washington.
www.wsCifff.org/

May 2016

13-14 WRMC
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.
www.northIdahoFlyCasters.org

June 2016

3-5 The Atlantic Salmon Fly International
Renton, Washington.
www.asfi-expo.com

August 2016

2-6 IFFF Fly Fishing Fair
Livingston, Montana.
fair@fedFlyFishers.org
A CASE OF Disappearing BLUEGILLS

By Terry and Roxanne Wilson

Many anglers associate large bluegills with shallow water. Certainly, they reside there for an extended period during their spring spawn and for brief feeding forays during twice daily migrations in the summer and autumn, but that leaves a high percentage of their lives spent elsewhere. To understand more precisely where you need to fish, you must first understand why the bluegills vacate the shallows.

Did your last visit to your favorite pond leave you wondering why the big bluegills have disappeared? Fortunately, despite your recent lack of success, the fish are still there and not on a hunger strike: they’ve just relocated to deeper water. Here’s how to find them and rekindle that vibrating rod you cherished when they were readily available in the shallows.

Depth provides comfort both in terms of body temperature and avoidance of direct sunlight. Lacking eyelids, their exposure to sunlight is the human equivalent of staring into the sun. While able to withstand a wide range of water temperatures, bluegills, as cold-blooded creatures, are most comfortable between 75 and 85 degrees. This provides a clue concerning their deep water hideouts.
The depth of sunlight penetration needs to be taken into consideration. In weedy environments, sunlight penetration is the depth from which the weed line grows. That depth can vary greatly from one body of water to another depending on water clarity. The light penetration may be a few feet in stained water and up to 20 feet in clear.

If the water contains a lot of structure such as brush piles, submerged stumps, rock piles, and depressions, locating the large bluegills is simplified. By checking water temperatures at various depths and understanding the depth of weed growth, we can seek structure at those depths. But, most ponds aren’t rich in subsurface anomalies capable of holding fish. Many have even had their bottom character erased by piles of silt covering the contours and structure. These ponds have, in effect, become “fish bowls” that are vacant of structure. While this complicates the process of locating deep water bluegills, most of these silted ponds are smaller than their well-structured counterparts.

Large bluegills often suspend over deep water even in structurally diverse lakes. Sometimes this is simply a matter of convenience. A lengthy migration to structure is rejected in deference to suspending over deep water near the shallow feeding flats. In fish bowl waters, suspension is the only available option. At times bluegills suspend surprisingly shallow over deep water. For example they may be located only 3 feet deep over a 28-foot bottom, but they might also suspend at 26 feet off that same bottom or anyplace in between. Again, the difference is primarily related to sunlight penetration. Exceptionally overcast skies will find fish locating higher in the water column, but only if a comfortable water temperature can be found at that depth. Further inducement to locate there can be a feeding opportunity such as nymphs rising to the surface or a nearby pod of minnows. Bright penetrating sunlight, on the other hand, will force the bluegills to locate much deeper.

The easiest method of determining the location of suspended bluegills is accomplished with a fish locator. While some small crafts including float tubes are outfitted with locators, most are not. Anglers must rely on trolling, controlled drifting or random casting to present flies at various depths over the entire deep water section of the pond to locate the fish. This leaves shorebound anglers at a bit of a disadvantage if they are unable to cast to the entire area of the pond.

Whether you are able to navigate the waterway or are confined to the bank, two presentation options will aid the search. First, sinking lines with a uniform sink rate can be used to “count down” to various depths until the search produces fish. The other option involves exploring various predetermined depths by utilizing either a strike indicator or a conventional
slip bobber. Since these suspended fish are not actively feeding, they are not inclined to chase a meal but will feed opportunistically, making a strike detection device a good option.

Presentation success, whether trolling, drifting or still-fishing, is largely dependent upon whether the bluegills are tightly or loosely schooled. Again a locator makes this determination easy, but trial and error is the lone method for those without this tool. If the fish are loosely schooled, they will be easier to locate because they will occupy a larger area. Remember the comfort factor in their suspension. All of the school will locate at nearly the same depth to experience the same level of comfort. Bluegills tend to school loosely in times of stable weather, as indicated by a rising or stable barometer, and when they are undisturbed by predators. Tightly schooled bluegills band closer together during a rapidly falling barometer or when they have been frightened. Tightly schooled fish are more difficult to locate because they occupy a smaller area, but once found, the fly fisher may be able to entice them to feed competitively by enabling hooked fish to fight amongst their buddies. Often in this situation other bluegills can be seen following the hooked fish. They can also be seen pecking at the fly lodged in the fish’s mouth. They may regard that bluegill's gyrations as an attempt to keep the tasty morsel from them.

There are many flies capable of catching suspended bluegills. If casting with a sinking line, try a small streamer. Any marabou-winged pattern is especially desirable due to the enhanced action. These streamers should be tied in a hook size representing the local minnows. For those using strike indicators or slip bobbers, three weighted fly types outperform all others: soft hackle patterns, small Woolly Buggers and any fly with rubber hackle. Again subtle action is the key to enticing a bluegill to strike. Since these presentations are normally beneath the depth of sunlight for a deep water presentation, the authors recommend using a sinking line, strike indicator or a slip-type float.

Prior page, the author’s weighted, rubber-leg fly presented under a strike indicator brought this beauty to hand.
penetration, darker colors that present a stark silhouette are most easily seen. Soft hackle patterns with black, purple, claret or olive bodies and dark hackle work best in size 12. Dark-colored Woolly Buggers in size 12 or 14 featuring marabou tails shortened to no more than the length of the fly body in order to prevent short strikes offer good results. Similarly sized, rubber-hackled flies that incorporate the same dark-colored materials are excellent as well.

Too often bluegill fishermen search the shallows to the exclusion of all other options. They fail to consider the conditions facing their target species. Taking sunlight penetration and time of year into consideration will enable you to adapt your presentation and experience the joy of catching more large bluegills on a regular basis.

Terry and Roxanne Wilson of Bolivar, Missouri, are longtime Flyfisher contributors focusing on warm water fly fishing. Their new book, “Crappie Fly Fishing: A Seasonal Approach,” is available through their website at TheBluegillPond.com or e-mail them at TerryWil@WindStream.net.
Whether it’s a snook cruising in lightly breaking surf along a Sanibel, Florida beach, a redfish pushing a big wake on the Barataria Estuary of Louisiana, or a speckled trout crashing baitfish on the Laguna Madre of Texas, the Gulf Coast offers fly fishers a virtually endless array of targets for a well-placed streamer fly.

On the beaches, bays and flats of the Gulf Coast, it behooves the beginner – as well as the salty veteran – to bring along well-balanced fly tackle, a few sound casting techniques and a selection of proven streamer patterns to get the most out of the saltwater experience.

Selecting the right streamer fly patterns can get downright personal since there are so many choices, from the classics to the latest synthetic masterpieces. And don’t forget a
few of those shrimp, crab, popper and spoon fly choices to fill out the saltwater fly box.

To help make the choice in the streamer category, it makes sense to try to imitate or simulate the real thing – those finger mullet, mud minnows, anchovies, menhaden, killifish, cocahoe minnows and pinfish that make up the everyday diet of the Gulf’s most sought-after game fish.

A few of my favorite streamer patterns that have traveled well from Florida to Louisiana to Texas over the years include the Monomoy Flatwing, Trey Combs Sea Habit, Lefty’s Deceiver (original and modified), Half and Half, Townsend Fishmaker, Cactus Shrimp and Clouser Deep Minnow for starters.

On a recent spring visit to a jetty pass on the Texas coast, I was fortunate to have a decent selection of these streamer patterns on hand when numbers of redfish, Spanish mackerel and jack crevalle decided to show up at the same time, often within a 60-foot cast of the rocks. Since I had streamers in different sizes, profiles and sink rates, I was able to make adjustments that made for an exciting day.

On my walk out to the end of the jetty I discovered that the Spanish mackerel were fond of smaller streamer patterns, Clouser Minnow and Puglisi Peanut Bunker patterns dressed on size 2 and 4 hooks that mimicked the anchovies they were feasting on.

But once I was out on the tip of the jetty, it was a different story. There, I found jack crevalle in the 8 to 10 pound class furiously attacking larger baitfish in the breaking waves and wash at the edge of the rocks. Looking for a higher profile streamer for these bullies, I chose the Townsend Fishmaker fly, a flowing white maribou and ostrich feather pattern with a few strands of silver flash material on a large hook. The jacks attacked it instantly. All I had to do was drop the fly into the melee and the wave action alone was enough to draw a quick strike.

After several adventurous connections with the jacks involving long runs and occasional cutoffs on the rocks, I was excited to see a school of about 60 redfish in the 28- to 30-inch class suddenly appear near the surface on the surf side of the jetty. Though these reds, facing into the current and holding virtually stationary, provided an easy target, they showed little interest in the white maribou streamer that was so enticing to the jacks.

Opposite, a spotted sea trout, one of the most popular game fish on the Gulf Coast, falls for a Chartreuse Clouser.
I decided to switch to a Comb’s Sea Habit pattern that closely resembled the finger mullet dashing by next to the rocks. Once I dropped it into the herd of reds and allowed it to sink a couple of feet, it took only a couple of strips to draw a strike. Adding to the excitement during the fight with these redfish were the big jacks that often would appear in the clear water following slowly behind my hooked fish.

On another Florida trip just up the coast at Palm Island, fishing around midnight under a big, bright full moon, my partner David Sams and I opted for larger deceiver patterns that often would appear in the clear explosive strikes from snook cruising the water following slowly behind my hooked fish.

Down on Louisiana’s bayous, a variety of streamer patterns also works well on the local redfish population. But sometimes the off-color water in the marshes calls for the extra buzz and flash that a spoon fly can provide.

Experimenting to find just the right streamer pattern for the moment also has worked for me on occasion along Florida’s West Coast where I have had success using a small flash pattern to sight-cast to snook in the middle of the day along Sanibel Island’s beaches.
Captain Rich Waldner of Port Sulphur, Louisiana guides clients on the Barataria Estuary on the west side of Mississippi River and in the Venice area. His spoon fly design, which comes in many colors all with Louisiana’s iconic Fleur-de-lis symbol stamped on it, gets rave reviews from fly fishers for its effectiveness. Waldner says the action of his spoon fly design imitates a fleeing crab as much as a darting baitfish. “Often redfish will close in on it faster because they think it is a small crab getting away,” he said.

Switching to smaller, unweighted, more sparsely dressed flies is a simple and effective way to counter the wind. As deadly as a weighted fly can be in some situations, in a stiff wind it might be time for a Cactus Shrimp or Chico’s Bonefish Special on a size 4 hook rather than that dependable, but more heavily weighted, Half and Half dressed on a size 1/0 hook.

Getting in Shape for the Salt
Fly fishers more familiar with making short, precise casts on spring creeks for browns and bows than casting 60 feet to a tailing redfish on an open, windblown flat will benefit greatly from a few pre-trip casting sessions. To practice making longer casts with heavier, saltwater fly tackle, there are a number of techniques and adjustments that experienced saltwater fly casters use to get the most out of the saltwater experience. I’m listing them here in no particular order of importance.

Underlining
For tighter, wind-resistant loops on difficult days, try dropping down a line weight. For example use a 7-weight line on an 8-weight rod.
This allows the caster to extend additional line outside the guides and achieve a tighter, wind-resistant loop in the wind.

**The Double Haul**
The double haul technique is the fly caster’s most dependable wind buster. The angler pulls down on the fly line at the end of the backcast and at the end of the forward cast, creating additional load to the rod, thus increasing line speed and imparting a “turbo” effect to the cast.

**Presenting the Fly with the Backcast**
Positioning yourself to present the fly accurately with a backcast is an effective way to counter a stiff, difficult crosswind common in many saltwater situations. This is useful when casting from a jetty or beachfront. Likewise, the technique also can be employed effectively when casting from the bow of a skiff, especially when a target suddenly appears behind the caster.

**Curb your movement on the bow of the boat**
We all get excited on the casting platform of a skiff when tail and fin targets start popping up in front of us on the shallow flats, but one should try to keep the feet still when preparing to cast to a sighted quarry. Avoid moving the feet unnecessarily and rocking the boat. This is not the
time to announce your presence to the quarry. Instead, wait until the fish chomps down on your favorite streamer fly. Then announce your presence with a smooth but firm strip strike.

**Gulf Coast Checklist**
The following is a checklist for organizing that next Gulf Coast fly fishing trip to Sarasota, Tampa, Fort Walton Beach, New Orleans, Houston, Corpus Christi or South Padre Island.

**Equipment**
A 7- or 8-weight fly rod with a single-action, click-drag, rim control or disc-drag reel loaded with 150 to 200 yards of 20-pound Micron or Dacron backing and a weight-forward floating fly line is a good choice for the fly fisher targeting most inshore Gulf species.

In addition to that trusty, user-friendly, weight-forward floating line, take along a clear, intermediate sinking line. Not only are these lines effective in getting a fly down a few feet on deeper flats and channel edges, their higher density makes them more wind resistant and easier to cast on a windy day.

**Clothing and Accessories**
In addition to a wide-brimmed hat, lightweight sun balaclava, light rain gear, and hard-soled wading boots, a pair of polarized sunglasses is probably the single most essential accessory for any fly fisher setting out for a day on a Gulf Coast flat. Not only do they protect the caster from errant casts, harmful UV rays and the brutal glare off the water, without them there is no sight in sight-casting.
A red fish falls for a Half & Half streamer pattern
Annual Saltwater Licenses
Florida resident saltwater $17, non-resident $47, non-resident 3-day $17, 7-day $30, MyFwc.com; Louisiana resident $22.50, non-resident $90 wlf.Louisiana.gov/Licenses/Fishing/

Texas resident saltwater $35, non-resident $63, TexasFishingLicense.org.

Informational Books

Using the information, books and tips I’ve shared with you here should help prepare you for an enjoyable and productive Gulf Coast trip. One last thing that can be really important is your physical preparedness. If you are an out-of-shape office worker, you won’t magically get into good physical condition just because you decide to make a trip to the Gulf Coast. I think it’s a good idea to include physical exercise as part of your trip preparation. Your day on the water will be much more enjoyable if you are not exhausted long before the day’s end from casting a heavier saltwater rod.

Phil Shook, author of “Flyfisher’s Guide to Mexico,” is a freelance angling writer in Houston. He is a lifetime member of the IFFF and recipient of the Silver King and Arnold Gingrich Literary Awards.
I hate February. The older I get, the more so. It is full of cold, snowy, gray days and generally not conducive to enjoyable fly fishing, at least where I live. While trips to New Zealand, Chile or other south-of-the-equator fly fishing destinations can help with this problem, they require long flights and long stays – not something I can do on an annual basis.

Fortunately, I stopped being exclusively a trout fisherman and got into saltwater fly fishing a few years back. A week’s vacation to the warm waters of the Caribbean for bonefish, permit and tarpon is just the ticket for a winter trip to look forward to. But for me it can’t be just any destination, as the only thing I dislike more than February is large crowds. My wife is a serious scuba diver, so there is no way I am doing a week in the islands by myself. Sounds like an impossible place to find? Not so, the Little Cayman Island is just the spot.

Little Cayman Island is the smallest of the three islands making up the Cayman Islands, Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac being the other two. They are a British Overseas Territory, located roughly 150 miles south of Cuba and a bit less than 170 miles northwest of Jamaica. Little Cayman is approximately 10 miles long and one mile wide with a full-time population somewhere in the mid-100 range. Most of the island is undeveloped and easy to explore. Access to the island is by boat or plane and is serviced by Cayman Airways. It is a renowned destination spot for scuba divers in addition to fishing.

A few vacation rentals and a handful of small resorts offer fully inclusive accommodations. As this is a sparsely populated island, groceries and eating out are limited, so the resorts are your
best option. Among these, the Southern Cross Fish and Dive Club is one fishing resort in the Caribbean; having been established in 1958, it may be the oldest. This is where I stayed and had the pleasure to fish with Chris Gough, head guide for Southern Cross. He was extremely enthusiastic, an excellent fish spotter and most importantly, patient. This is an important quality in a guide, especially after you have just clunked a nice tailing bonefish on its head with your fly.

The bonefish are in good numbers and average between 2 to 4 pounds. They can be spooky and quite finicky, so every hookup you get is well earned. Even when they were at their most difficult, fishing was intense and exciting. Size 4 or 8 crab or bonefish flies are your basic patterns ranging in color from tan to brown. Much of the flats and bay areas are covered in turtle grass, so weed guards on your flies are a must. A 12-foot, 8- or 12-pound leader will do the trick, but adding a fluorocarbon tippet when the fish get really spooky is a plus. Casting distances were generally in the 30- to 50-foot range, but a cast of 60 feet might occasionally be called for. I fished with a 7-weight rod but would not have felt over-gunned with an 8-weight. On a couple of the windier days this may have been a better choice for more accurate presentations.

A good portion of the island is bonefish and permit water with reasonably sheltered spots to be found on one side of the island or the other if a storm blows in. Access is good and is mostly walk/wading, but some areas are better accessed by a flats boat. The bottom varies from sand to soft bottom with turtle grass to hard coral rubble, so flats boots are a good idea. Small sharks, various types of rays, turtles, octopus, lobster and

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a host of other critters can be seen while wading. A passing yellow jack, mutton snapper or barracuda will also take a fly if you are so inclined.

As they follow the Queen’s Chain, the miles of beach and flats areas can be fished to the high tide level without trespassing. So long as you employ catch-and-release fishing, no license is required; however, check to be sure this hasn’t changed before venturing out. An appealing feature of the island is that fishing can be done on your own, but I would strongly recommend doing at least a few days with a guide such as Gough. The fish are tough and don’t suffer mistakes lightly. No matter how experienced you are, you can always learn local nuances and methods best early on from the resident pro so the learning curve does not eat up too much of your valuable vacation time.

Tarpon fishing is also available in aptly named Tarpon Lake. This spring-fed brackish lake, approximately 9 acres, had tarpon deposited in it by way of a hurricane years ago and is now a self-sustaining population. These “baby” tarpon, averaging in size from 3 to 6 pounds, lie in and around the dead mangrove branches on the edges and channels of the lake, feeding on small baitfish about 1.5 inches long. Accordingly sized streamer patterns in black/purple, black/red or tan tied on appropriate saltwater hooks for small tarpon are the flies of choice.

Fishing is a mixture of sight-casting to rolling and gulping fish, as well as blind-casting to likely looking spots. Casting distances could be as close as 20 feet but when blind-casting, the longer the cast the better.

An 8- or 9-weight rod is a good choice for this water, as you need to control the fight early to prevent snagging in underwater obstructions.
Nothing to do but smile. When a bonefish decides to run, the only thing the author could do was let it go until fatigue slowed it down enough so he could turn its head.
From left to right: A baby tarpon jumps high close to the boat, just what the author needed to make his day! A yellow jack, pound for pound these fish put up a strong fight. A typical baby tarpon from Tarpon Lake, these tarpon live in a brackish water pond and they average 3-6 lbs.
Even so it didn’t always work out as planned, and I lost a few determined fish to underwater mangrove branches. Unlike the bonefish and permit fishing, you will need a guide to do Tarpon Lake since a boat is required. Fishing is generally early in the morning or late in the afternoon and is a good option if difficult weather makes fishing the flats and bays too hard. Trust me when I say it is a hoot and a must-do trip should you get the chance.

If you are looking for a fishing destination with nightlife, high-rise hotels and luxurious spas, then Little Cayman Island is not the place for you. There are much better options if this is a requirement. Nor, due to its size, is it a destination for large fishing parties. What it does offer, however, is a laid-back island feel, minimal numbers of people, beautiful water, good fishing and excellent scuba diving in a comfortable environment. Whether an advanced saltwater fisherman, novice or somewhere in between, you will find exciting fishing opportunities. It is the perfect place to disrupt the winter doldrums, one I plan to keep as an option to counter my scorn for February.

Bill Toone is this publication’s editor-in-chief and lives with his wife, Arletta, in Bozeman, Montana, where he telecommutes to his day job as director of purchasing for the Hylton Group in northern Virginia. He is also an instructor and guide for the Yellowstone Fly Fishing School as well as an IFFF master casting instructor.
Baitfish? In a fly fishing magazine? If the term offends the fly fisher, then perhaps “forage fish” would be a better term. In any event, whether a fisher threads a little mullet on a treble hook and casts to a spotted sea trout, or imitates the same with fur and feathers, the importance of these small fish is understood by everyone that fishes.

Baitfish? In a fly fishing magazine? If the term offends the fly fisher, then perhaps “forage fish” would be a better term. In any event, whether a fisher threads a little mullet on a treble hook and casts to a spotted sea trout, or imitates the same with fur and feathers, the importance of these small fish is understood by everyone that fishes.

Around the Gulf of Mexico, there are many species of forage fish that game fish such as the spotted sea trout, redfish and flounder favor as food. The redfish feeds on 50 or more forage fish species, but the fly fisher imitates only a few. Knowing which forage fish the game fish are eating, their color, size and swimming movement, and the water depth where these fish are normally found, is helpful information to the fly fisher as well as a bait fisher.

Mullet

One of the most widespread forage fish is the mullet. Actually there are several mullet species, but the striped mullet, *Mugil cephalus*, and the white mullet, *Mulgil curema*, are the most common in Gulf estuaries. They can reach almost 20 inches in length but the small juveniles are the ones most often taken by game fish. My first introduction to the mullet came when I was in my early 20s and had just moved to the Texas Gulf Coast from the Dallas area. Near my apartment, a sluggish bayou wandered through town eventually connecting to Galveston Bay. I observed some silvery fish that were at least a foot long leap from the water and then leap again. Then another silvery flash skipped along the surface, then another. I drove home and got my casting rod, and for hours I tried to hook one of those fish on a huge bass lure, a Heddon Lucky-13 as I remember. My choice of a lure brought a big laugh.
from a new saltwater fishing friend, J.W. Gammel, when I told him of my frustrating experience. (Years later J.W. and Bill Gammel wrote the fly casting booklet for the IFFF.)

Why mullet jump when not being pursued by predators could be to fill an organ in their throat with air, but when they do jump, they excite novice saltwater fishers that don't know any better. They feed on zooplankton, green algae and small benthic invertebrates but never something as big as a Lucky-13. Often bait fishers do catch big mullet by first chumming with poultry pellets and then tossing in a tiny hook baited with a piece of worm. The fish's primary interest to Gulf of Mexico fly fishers is its role as forage fish for spotted sea trout and redfish.

Striped mullet females produce from 1 million to 7 million eggs each year. Like saltwater game fish and the majority of their baitfish prey, they are broadcast spawners. They don't build nests and guard their eggs as do bass and bream in nearby freshwater environments. The adult mullet gather in channels to release their eggs and sperm into the water column. After fertilization the eggs settle to the offshore bottom and hatch after three or four days. The young mullet will move to inshore estuaries and shallow marshes when they are one-half to 1.5 inches long to escape predation. They can live in freshwater, brackish water or highly saline water, over mud or sand bottoms, among the mangrove roots and in seagrass beds. Juveniles the size that spotted sea trout prefer stay in the estuaries from summer through the fall. By midsummer they have grown from 4 to 8 inches in length. The larger spotted sea trout prefer big mullet, as big as they can swallow, selecting them preferentially over shrimp and crabs. The smaller mullet favor the shallower water to evade predators: too shallow and the birds pick them off.

Ron Win of Melbourne, Florida ties a MacMullet, a realistic mullet in shape, color and size.
off, too deep and the trout and redfish catch them. Even in deeper water they tend to head toward the surface when pursued, so fly fishers often use unweighted mullet flies when game fish drive the mullet up to the surface. Mullet are often seen dimpling the surface while skimming organic material from it.

The length of baitfish found in the salt marsh and seagrass beds varies with the seasons. Pinfish typify baitfish’s size seasonally. The pinfish larvae move into the grassy flats and marsh grasses in groups with spring tides, so groups of juveniles of any one particular size often occur together. They enter the estuaries in the winter and early spring months, and grow to 1-inch-long juveniles. By summer they are 2 to 3 inches long. When mature in one to two years, they are more than 4 inches long. Older 6-inch adult pinfish often join them in the shallow grassbeds for the summer. The largest pinfish are found in the estuary in the fall months before cold weather forces them to migrate to deeper water. Some fly tiers use a cast net to sample the baitfish in a particular marsh or estuary to more closely match their flies to the real article. This comparison is especially important when matching the size of the fly to the baitfish size; the better the match, the greater is the fly fishing success.

Mullet are often at the water’s surface, feeding on floating organic material or absorbing more oxygen at the air-water surface interface. After shrimp, mullet are probably the most common live bait sold at bait shops around the Gulf. They are fairly hardy, much easier to keep alive than menhaden and other delicate forage fish. Other tough baitfish that are sold in bait shops include mud minnows, croaker and pinfish.
Other Baitfish Eaten by Spotted Sea Trout and Redfish

Many studies have been done over the years analyzing spotted sea trout and redfish's stomach contents. While these studies are tremendously useful to fish resource managers, they often do not reflect the prey species taken where fly fishers like to fish, such as the marshes, the shallow flats and weedy seagrass beds. For example, a redfish stomach contents study in Galveston Bay showed that in the fall they eat almost 60 percent crabs and shrimp, with 40 percent fish. Of that 40 percent, 9 percent were menhaden, and mullet, shrimp eels and tonguefish were about 7 percent each. The rest included hardhead catfish, bay anchovies, least pufferfish and midshipman fish. They even eat sea anemones.

These numbers often do not reflect what the redfish are taking in the shallows that wading fly fishers prefer, so using a cast net to sample the baitfish will pay dividends to the fly fisher, especially one that ties flies. Of course, even if shrimp eels are present, they are really hard to catch in a net. They burrow down into the soft bottom to escape when a cast net is thrown. They are missed in shrimp trawls, because the skinny eels go through the net's mesh. That is why shrimp eels are rarely found in a bait shop; they are too hard to catch. Fishers often don’t know they are around unless they keep a redfish and examine the prey species in the stomach contents.

Sea trout and redfish stomach analyses sampled in the middle of the bay don’t show very many sheepshead minnows (*Cyprinodon varigatus*), but as one Texas biologist told me “the redfish just eat the hell out of them” in the shallow waters where they may be abundant. In fact, in the mangroves and salt marshes they are often the most common game fish prey. These are shallow water to midwater prey fish, along with the sailfin molly (*Poecilia latipinna*); seven or eight other killifishes include the rainwater killifish (*Lucania parva*) and the mud minnow or Gulf killifish...
(Fundulus grandis). Of these, only the Gulf killifish are commonly sold in bait shops.

Silverside minnows and the various anchovies are usually in the upper water column of open bays. The bay anchovies can tolerate lower salinity waters and are the species most often found in brackish shallow marshes where fly fishers often wade after game fish. All of these are lumped into one group and called glass minnows by anglers.

The sheepshead minnow is an amazingly tough fish, able to live in hot or cold water from 29 F to 109 F, and survive oxygen levels as low as one part per million dissolved oxygen by using aquatic surface respiration. In contrast a freshwater brown trout requires 7.8 parts per million dissolved oxygen to survive.

Sheepshead minnows hold the record for salt tolerance, with salt content from zero to hyper saline water as high as 140 parts per thousand or four times that of normal seawater. Recently I caught some of them in my cast net, carefully put them in an aerated water bucket, and threw the cast net in the truck bed. After driving 60 miles home, I was surprised to find one of those sheepshead minnows stuck in the damp net and still alive.

Sheepshead can change color depending on the water clarity and bottom color. These little fish breed year-round in warm water and from February to October in cold water. The breeding male turns deep blue and is even more aggressive and less cautious about predators than normal. This little tidbit of information is a great tip to our readers as a blue sheepshead minnow imitation can

Crabs and shrimp such as these white shrimp are the favorite redfish prey during the fall, when shrimp numbers peak in the saltwater estuaries.
be an excellent color choice when making a fly pattern selection. Many other forage fish inhabit the shallow marshes. A particularly interesting one is the sailfin molly, a small one-half inch to 2.5-inch fish. Most baitfish are broadcast spawners, but the molly bears live young. The colorful males have showy dorsal fins that they display to females. They rarely live more than a year after reaching maturity. This is probably because the more colorful males suffer severely from increased predation, and the stresses of attracting a mate often finish off the ones that have not been consumed as part of a larger fish's diet.

The shallow marsh area can be a stressful place in terms of oxygen levels. Photosynthesis jumps the levels up during the morning, and may be supersaturated at 20 parts per million by midday. However, due to respiration of algae and other living organisms it often drops to less than 1 part per million before dawn. Fish in these extreme environments utilize aquatic surface respiration to survive. They swim to the surface and pump the water that is richer in absorbed oxygen over their gills. Sheepshead, mollies and all of the killifish species use this process to survive, so they are present when incoming tides return the higher-oxygenated water to their environment. Unfortunately for them, those same tides also bring their game fish predators that require the higher oxygen levels to survive.

Menhaden (Brevoortia sp.), range in the Atlantic from New England to the Gulf of Mexico and in the Atlantic near-shore coastal waters. Up to 400,000 tons are caught annually for fishmeal and oil while game fish from tarpon to redfish favor them. Juveniles such as the one in this photo are found in shallow to mid-depth estuary water.

How does this information translate into something useful to the shallow
saltwater fly fisher? Choosing the fly by shape, size and color, then giving it the right action is as essential to successful fishing as is deciding when to fish it. Also, the water clarity and light level will determine how far flies can be seen. Darker flies and chartreuse work well in murky water. Keep in mind that chartreuse is the one color to which many generations of fly tiers and saltwater flats anglers attest to how effectively chartreuse attracts fish. Therefore it’s important to include chartreuse in your fly pattern selection.

With the information I’ve shared with you here, I hope you find fishing success when you visit the Gulf Coast area. As always I enjoy hearing from you to learn of your adventures. I’ll see you on the water!
One of these killifish has been recently studied in the Texas Laguna Madre along with its parasite, a trematode, Euhaplorchis sp. These flatworms first infect an intermediate snail host, and then the disc-shaped parasite larvae swim over and attach to the killifish's gills. It then migrates to the fish's brain cavity. The flatworms actually take over the brain of the fish, forcing it to swim in an erratic fashion close to the surface, making it attractive to bird predators, the flatworm's final host. Flatworm eggs produced in the bird are then deposited with the bird's fecal matter to begin the parasitic cycle again. Other closely related fish species probably have similar topically transmitted parasites in marsh food chains. A closely related flatworm infects California killifish, making them 30 times more likely to be consumed by birds. Game fish note this erratic behavior, and take many of these parasitized killifish as they swim near the surface. This fact can be advantageous if the fly fisher mimics the erratic surface motion of these killifish, the minds of which are controlled by flatworm parasites.
For Further Reading


RockPortFlyFishers.com/flies/flies.html

vims.edu_docs/fish_vision82.pdf

Verne Lehmberg from Dayton, Texas, is a longtime Federation member, excellent photographer and writer. He is Flyfisher’s “Biology on the Fly” columnist. Give him your feedback at VerneLehmberg@yahoo.com.

The longer-bodied mud minnow, suspended between the sheepshead minnow above and the two mollies below, is a favorite commercial baitfish. It is tolerant of low dissolved oxygen.

The sailfin molly is one of the most striking midwater prey fish. The mature males (below) vary in size usually from 1 to 3 inches. The larger males have the larger dorsal fin and are colorful when attracting females, with the colors highly variable. Different marshes will hold differently colored mollies, with the fish flashing pinks, blues, greens and golds.
Shape, size and color are important factors in saltwater baitfish fly design. Steve Ferrar's Baitfish and Glitter Critter have the wide menhaden shape, while the slimmer Clouser Streamer, Cowen's Silversides and Surf Candy mimic the glass minnows, bay anchovy, silversides and similar baitfish. Mullet may be imitated with realistic flies like the Rattle Mullet, shown in Biology on the Fly, page 53, and the MacMullet. Wide-bodied pinfish have distinct vertical lines, seen in Fred Hannie's pinfish. Shrimp eels are important Gulf Coast prey that fly fishers often overlook. In eel habitat, long sinuous flies like Enrico Puglisi's Eel work well when fished on the bottom.
The spoon flies are easy to cast and effective in water where realism is less important but good motion and a little flash is needed. All these spoons flutter and flash as they are retrieved. The Coma Spoon twists slightly upon being retrieved in short strips, then rotates back to its hook-down position when stopped.

For murky waters, a darker fly works well. Black, olive or brown like the GT Pinfish and the bendback Foxy Clouser stand out in dark water. Note that many of these baitfish flies have some chartreuse color in them, which for some reason is an effective color for saltwater flies. Marine fish see chartreuse well.

Verne Lehmberg from Dayton, Texas, is a longtime Federation member and Flyfisher contributor. See more of his excellent photography in Biology on the Fly.
Focus on the Fly

Glitter Critter
Chris Lancaster
Port Aransas, Texas

GT Pinfish
Drew Chicone
Fort Meyers, Florida

Monomoy Flatwing
Orvis

Surf Candy
Steve Flanagan
Shertz, Texas

Bowdens Flexo Minnow
Orvis

Clouser Streamer
Joe DeForke
Missouri City, Texas

Bend-Back Foxy Clouser
Kevin Hutchison
Austin, Texas

Pinfish
Fred G. Hannie
Lake Charles, Louisiana
This pattern is a variant of Bob Popovic's Surf Candy. Though it is not an exact copy of the original pattern, the basic concept for both patterns is the same. The name itself pays homage to the originator. The concept is to make a minnow imitation using materials tied to a hook and covered with epoxy or an epoxy substitute. New UV resin materials have made the use of epoxy less desirable, as the new resins available today are faster, clearer and easier to use. Choose from several brands of resins on the market. I will be using Deer Creek’s Diamond Hard UV resin. It cures in just a few seconds and is tack free, not requiring coating with a secondary material.

I have added the element of monofilament to bring bulk and translucency as well as a touch of realism to the pattern. Tied on a size 8 hook, this fly can be effective for numerous species in both fresh and salt water. Color can be added from within with material choices or added externally with markers.

When tying this pattern for a specific body of water, I try to find out what forage species of minnow
FLY TIPS

Fish-catching Colors That Cross Over

By Kelly G. Glissmeyer

Many saltwater and freshwater anglers agree that using chartreuse-colored materials in fly patterns is a smart move because fish are strongly attracted to this bright, yellow-green fluorescent color. In saltwater situations this reasoning makes sense given the vivid and neon colors of many prey species. In freshwater, less so, but the effectiveness is no less noticeable.

A very easy-to-tie and effective crossover pattern for both salt and freshwater is the Clouser Minnow in chartreuse and white. This streamer catches Alaska salmon, coldwater trout or warmwater species like bass. Saltwater seems to be where this pattern really shines. In his 1994 book “The Professionals’ Favorite Flies,” Federator Lefty Kreh wrote concerning the Clouser Minnow: “I believe that this pattern is the most important and effective underwater fly developed in the past 20 years. During the past three years I have been able to catch 63 species of fish in fresh and saltwaters around the world with this pattern!”

Fred Hannie from Lake Charles, Louisiana, is a longtime Federator, member of the Fly Tying Group and serves on the Gulf Coast Council’s board of directors. He specializes in tying realistic flies and creating new patterns with monofilament. His patterns have been published in numerous fly fishing magazines.

If you are new to saltwater fly fishing and looking for a simple yet effective fly pattern that is fairly easy to tie, try the Clouser Minnow in chartreuse and white – you won’t be disappointed.

Kelly Glissmeyer and his wife, Cathy, reside in Rigby, Idaho, where they participate in all things fly fishing. He can be contacted at KgGliss@hotmail.com.
At the Vise

**MATERIALS**

Marsh Candy

**THREAD:** Danville’s 6/0 (white)

**EYES:** 3-D 1/8-inch silver

**WEIGHT:** .025 non-lead wire

**TAIL:** Ultra hair (clear)

**LATERAL LINE:** embroidery threads (black)

**MONOFILAMENT:** 40 to 50 pound

**COATING:** Diamond Hard UV resin

**MARKERS:** Copic Brand (YG97), (100)

1. With the hook secure in the vise, attach the thread. Tie one piece of 0.025 non-lead wire to the top and one piece to the bottom of the hook shank. The length of the wire should span from the bend of the hook to 3mm from the hook eye as shown.

2. Tie the clear Ultra Hair tail material to the hook shank. Start 3mm from the hook eye and allow the material to extend past the hook bend equal to the length of the hook shank.

3. To the top of the tail material, tie in two pieces of 40-pound monofilament. The length should be from the bend of the hook to just 3mm from the hook eye. Repeat this step and add another two pieces of mono on top of the previous pair.
At the Vise

The lateral line that is common in this species is added by tying in a piece of black embroidery thread to each side of the fly as shown.

The mouth parts are made using two pieces of 50-pound monofilament. The two pieces should be folded over just behind the hook eye and tied in under the hook.

Place a 1/8-inch 3-D eye on each side of the hook just behind the mouth parts. Using a bodkin, work the UV resin into the thread and monofilament of the fly. Cure the UV for a few seconds with the UV light.

Finished Fly: Once color is added with a marker, a second lighter coat of resin can be added to lock in the color. This pattern has become a useful addition to both my fresh and saltwater boxes. I hope you will enjoy experimenting with the color options and give this fly a try.
By Verne Lehmberg

These flies are primarily from the IFFF International Fly Fishing Fair in Livingston, Montana, in 2014 and in Bend, Oregon, in 2015. The IFFF Fair allows members from all over the world to view the flies and learn the tying techniques from the Federation’s demonstration fly tiers. In addition, the tiers offer many workshops, including such specialties as Wayne Luallen’s Introduction to Thread Control and Materials Handling and Oscar Fileu’s Life Cycle of the Caddis. Also offered are classes geared to local fishing, like Modern Fly Patterns for Oregon Cascade Lakes by Norm Domagala and Jerry Criss’ Hair Hackling for Trout and Steelhead. Carl Wubben’s Beginners Fly Tying and similar classes allows the fair’s visitors to get into the fascinating world of fly tying. Consider planning to sign up for the 2016 workshops at the Livingston show. These workshops are show highlights for many attendees. The IFFF’s Fly Tying Group offers the Bronze Award Program Workshop, in which participants are taught to tie the five flies they need to create for the Bronze Fly Tying Award. Contact the Fly Tying Group at fffFlyTyingGroup@gmail.com for more information.

Each year at the fair a tier making significant contributions to the arts is selected for the Buz Buszek Memorial Fly Tying Award. This year Mike George is the recipient. One example of this fly tier’s artwork in deer hair is the Rip Eyes Have It!!!

Verne Lehmberg from Dayton, Texas, is a longtime Federation member and Flyfisher contributor.
Dragonfly
Karen Royer
Lacey, Washington

Umbrella Dun
Hiromasa Takahashi, President
Japan Fly Fishing Association

Mohawk Minnow
Ron Mayfield
Pearland, Texas

Pink Pookie
(Hopper)
Dandy Reiner
Hatchfinders Fly Shop
Livingston, Montana

Rip Eyes Have It!!!
Mike George, 2015 Buszek Award
Olathe, Kansas

Supervisor #2
Peggy Brenner
Milford, New Hampshire

Tube Fly
Greg Corbet
Seattle, Washington

California Stonefly
Bill Blackstone
Ojai, California
with Pteronarcys californica

Conserving, Restoring, Educating Through Fly Fishing®
I recently revisited a “secret” brackish marsh in southern Louisiana that I hadn't fished in years. I usually wade there as the bottoms are sandy and water depth is less than a foot deep. Pre Hurricane Katrina, its shorelines were easily accessible from side roads that once led to now washed-out camps some distance into the marsh. Typically this water was not heavily fished, as it is too shallow for deeper draft boats. Additionally the sandy bottom now coated with a few inches of “marsh-muck” left over from Katrina appears uninviting to uninformed waders. It's one of my coveted rat red (fun-to-catch-but-must-release redfish under legal size) fisheries. Sometimes it’s teeming with schools of hungry rats eager to take small spoon flies. That day just after sunrise I witnessed a sight that's getting to be more and more common on waters in my area. My coveted “secret” marsh was dotted with pirogues, flatboats and kayaks all taking advantage of their ability to skim over the skinny (shallower) water in search of deeper-water holding reds.

The brackish swamps and marshes of southern Louisiana and the Gulf Coast have witnessed untold varieties of shallow water craft for hundreds of years. From dugouts to pirogues to flatboats and now kayaks, all have been and still are popular. Early Cajun settlers built their pirogues from readily available wood found in nearby cypress forests. The more recently arrived kayak originated from sub-Arctic peoples thousands of years ago. They also built theirs from readily available whale ribs and seal skins. Both were used to catch whatever was available in their native environment from fish and alligators in pirogues to fish, seals and whales from kayaks. Yes Virginia, you can catch big things in these “little boats.” To that end, my direction in this column is oriented to the fly fisher wanting to learn how to fly fish in skinny water in either type of craft.

To the many of you who have fished in skinny water using one of the aforementioned craft, I would like to pose a few questions: Was it more difficult to fly cast while seated low to the water’s surface? Were you able to sight-cast and be productive? And my last question: Is one craft more popular than another? To address the popularity question, first remember my location. Here in the swampy Deep South you probably paddled a pirogue before you walked. In short,
pirogues do appear to be more popular, at least in Louisiana, and are less expensive. On the other hand, kayaks are more widespread across all types of water, fresh or salt. Pirogues and kayaks offer many advantages, but the most obvious is stealth, ensuring a quiet and closer approach to schools of fish resulting in shorter fly casting distances. I have a few observations of individuals pursuing skinny water fly fishing in “skinny boats.” Many of them tended to overwork their cast because they sit low in the water. Some anglers appear to be limited to using a single type of cast for all fishing situations. And many anglers using boats or wading have a continuing love affair with heavier than necessary rods complemented by the increasing plethora of specialty lines.

Casting for distance can be reduced when sitting near the water’s surface in any craft. However, I believe that redfish can be approached much closer if you’re quiet and keep a low profile while preparing to cast. Also, I’ve read that being stealthy lessens the need for long-distance casts. So I pose this question: Is it better to be in “stealth mode” while sitting low in the water and make closer casts or sit higher and cast longer? I prefer to sit low in the water and make shorter casts to closer targets. And I think short, accurate casts are going to be more productive for first timer anglers fishing from pirogues or kayaks.

Launching practice loops on the grass with an 8-foot rod and weight-forward 6 floating line; this exercise should also help keep your legs limber for those long morning outings in a pirogue or kayak.
Casting

So let's get ready for some fishing. Our target will be 16-inch redfish; they'll be in skinny water and we'll be using small gold spoons. Hook sizes will range between 4s and 8s, and we'll be casting about 35 to 40 feet for starters. I would rig up as follows: The rod would be a medium-action, 8½-foot 6-weight. If you're going to stretch out casts to more than 50 feet, add 6 inches in rod length and go with a 9-footer. Before we actually fish we need to do a little practice casting, either in a seated or kneeling position. I suggest getting a foam cushion from the bottom of your boat and placing it in an open, grassy area. Alternatively you can just park your pirogue/kayak on the grass and sit or kneel in it. My perception of an ideal cast for presenting light flies for our fishing situation would be as follows.

That medium-action rod we selected should have a strong tip action and the ability to propel a standard forward cast with a flick of the wrist. Remember we're fishing in craft with limited space so we probably won't have the option of carrying more than one rod. A medium-action rod would be more versatile, as casting situations are ever changing. They have a “forgiving feel” during the cast, roll cast quite well and adapt to various line sizes better than slow- or fast-action rods. If you happen to need a slightly heavier line or even a lighter one for delicate casting situations, you only need to carry extra spools for the reel instead of multiple rods.

Now let's focus on practice casting while seated or kneeling using a standard forward cast with about 30 feet of line aerialized. The object here is to learn the action necessary for the tip of your rod to create a tight loop on both the forward cast and the backcast. The most important part of this drill is to turn and observe the appearance of your backcast and the beginning of the forward cast at the instant just before the backcast begins to straighten, flatten and fall. Begin the forward cast the instant you see the backcast start to straighten out. Then continue making gentle false casts while gauging your timing to narrow the loop height and control your line as it nears the grass in front of your practice position.

The purpose of the narrow loop is to help penetrate the ever-present wind you will encounter on open water and help with casting accuracy. While practicing at short distances, extending the cast another 10 feet should not be difficult. Remember, we're fishing small flies in skinny water only a foot or so in depth, so sinking lines will not be required. Heavier lines will come into play when your seated casting skills improve and you navigate to deeper waters holding those big bull redfish. For now, a long belly weight-forward 6 floating saltwater line will serve you well. If a little help is required to lengthen the cast and your double
hauling is a little shaky, allow the backcast to drop a little and “kiss” the water behind you to achieve some extra drag and increase the load on the fly rod. It’s called a water haul. Now let’s discuss leaders, the real balancing element between fly, line and rod. A leader has to be just right. For this endeavor, choose a 10-foot leader, tapered from 0.027 to 0.08. I make my own leaders using a softer monofilament (mono). If I use a ready-made leader, I cut back the tippet a little then add 6 to 8 inches of 1X mono followed with a foot of 2X. They make great, gentle presentations in skinny water and definitely reduce fish-spook factors when casting to wary prey.

Jump into a pirogue or kayak and go fly fishing in our abundant shallow marshes. If you’re careful and well prepared, you will get into a lot of fishing action. Don’t go too light on the tackle; the longer you fight a fish the harder it is for them to recover when released. Have fun, I’ll see you on the water! 📺

Master Casting Instructor Tom Tripi is from Folsom, Louisiana, where he uses a fly rod and canoe to pursue his favorite fish, teaches casting to students of all ages, and studies astronomy in his spare time.

Colin McCormick had a great morning fishing the shallows in his pirogue.
Our saltwater experiences have been peppered with unpredictable adventures and tales rather than grand slams or super slams. Several trips reaped catching rewards but the most memorable are of hurricanes, rerouted planes, stalking barracuda and a plane wreck.

You know how women often consult each other regarding wearing apparel before an outing? A friend recently asked me, “What are you wearing to the barbecue Saturday evening?”

“Well, it’s casual,” I said, “so I think I’ll wear a pair of flats pants.”

“Slacks?” she said.

“No, flats pants.”

“Did you say slacks?” she queried again.

“No, I said f-l-a-t-s pants.”

“Did you say FLATS pants?” she asked, finally getting it right.

“Yes.”

“Well, what the heck are flats pants?” I explained that flats pants are versatile, cross-over apparel that go easily from fishing the flats to a casual dinner in the evening. A long conversation ensued. Later it reminded me of an incident at Long Island, Bahamas. Our guide had anchored the Panga boat in a clear, expansive flat. We slipped out of the boat into the tepid salt water. The guide waded with Pat, and I went the opposite direction, scanning the surface for what might be tailing bonefish. I remember looking at the tan sand beneath my feet, the tan shells, tan rocks, the tan swaying algae around my legs, my tan fly line, my tan wading boots, and my tan flats pants. I mused, “I’m just another tan morsel in the food chain.” Then, looking up from my tan ensemble, I saw a steadily moving pointed fin on the surface of the sea. Forty feet from the boat, I froze. “JAWS!” my mind screamed. Somehow I kept my wits and avoided thrashing wildly toward the Panga. Forcing myself to take a long, deep breath, I realized I was looking at Jaws Jr., most likely a lemon or nurse shark but a SHARK nonetheless. It was unnerving! Thankfully I was able to watch as the predator cruised away.

The lodge had comfy rooms and...
fabulous meals. Beaches were pristine, and the seawater was clear with abundant starfish and mounds of conch shells turned into conch stews and hors d’oeuvres. However, our trip followed on the tail of a hurricane, and the baitfish had moved out to sea; in our group of eight, only one bonefish was caught the entire week. Bonefish, tarpon and other species were driven to deeper waters with the baitfish – well, all except for one large predator that was left behind and apparently on the hunt for its daily meal.

Later that day our angling party, minus one, gathered for an evening meal. As dusk deepened we all pondered the whereabouts of Larry. Wine was poured, glasses raised in a “salud,” and then a stooped and ashen Larry stumbled in the door. A man of stature and a hardy 240 pounds, he was clearly shaken. Wading the flats in the late afternoon, along a dense area of mangroves, Larry happened on a stream running into the flat. Unable to sally the dense grove, he ventured deeper into the sea and encountered a large, bold and inquisitive barracuda. It kept Larry trapped in the mangrove and stalking his every movement. Larry beat his fly rod on the surface and the ‘cuda would swim off a short distance and then return again. This beating and circling rivalry carried on for some
time until the brazen fish finally
tired of the game and swam away.
When certain the fearless predator
wouldn’t return, Larry backtracked
and returned to the lodge.

After toasting his safe return, a Q&A
session ensued for the remainder
of the evening. Exciting encounters
aside, my favorite event was standing
on the beach watching the Hale-
Bopp comet flash across the cobalt,
Caribbean sky.

Another of our trips was to Bahia Pez
Vela in Costa Rica. Scheduled to fly
directly from Houston to San Jose,
Costa Rica, we once again followed
the remnants of a hurricane. Rain and
wind turned ferocious, and we were
rerouted to Panama City, Panama. If
we couldn’t land in Panama, we would
reroute to Bogotá, Colombia. Luckily,
we landed in Panama City. The airport
closed right after our arrival. This
unscheduled landing wreaked havoc;
our passports were not checked, and
we were put under the watchful eye
of the Federales. It was midnight
when we landed; a Latin ensemble
played “Macarena” in the bar, so we
joined the party. At 2 a.m. we went to
bed; at 5 a.m., the Federales (armed
and unsmiling) woke us to catch an
early flight. Shuttled directly to the
plane and escorted onboard, we
lifted off at twilight into weeping
skies. We landed in San Jose an
hour and a half later, and it was still
raining. We grabbed breakfast at
McDonald’s and boarded a bus to
Bahia Pez Vela. The bus ride took six
hours, negotiating muddy roads and
wandering detours around washouts.
The scenery was magnificent as we
climbed through the fog into the high
mountains, eventually catching sight
of the Arenal Volcano as it erupted.
The steep hillsides were peppered
with coffee plantations. Even though
weary from a lack of sleep, we were
in awe of the lush greenery and the
Costa Rican culture.

We arrived safely, found our
cabanas, and had a luscious snack
of fresh ceviche and sliced mangos.
In search of billfish every morning
for six days we ventured out to
sea in diesel cruisers and every
afternoon we came back skunked.
Again, the hurricane chased away all
the baitfish along with the targeted
rooster and sailfish. Desperate to
catch something, we trolled flies
behind the boat and hooked several
needlefish and skip jacks. The whole
escapade was inconceivable.

The Yucatán was our most-recent
destination trip. Once again, it
rained several days prior to our
landing at Cabo San Lucas. Flights
were delayed; we waited a few hours
before boarding the small plane to
our destination. Lifting off the rain
continued. During the hour flight I
was seated directly behind the pilot.
We circled the short, coral landing
strip at the edge of the bay and saw
standing pools of water. The plane
touched down and then dropped into
one of the deeper pools, causing
water to wash up and over the
windshield. To say I was thoroughly shaken would be an understatement. Thankfully the lodge staff greeted us with fresh margaritas – a delightful welcome.

A small group waited on the dock to take our seats for their return trip to Cabo. Passing by, we nodded as we trundled past them for a late lunch at the lodge. As the meal was underway, those same people, dazed and dripping wet, lumbered in and said the plane had crashed. The drenched pilot explained that the plane was unable to attain enough speed to lift off the runway, so he aborted the flight; the plane glided nose first into the bay, bent the prop and then righted itself. Though frightened, no one was injured. Lunch was swept away, and the bar was open for free drinks – a survivor party ensued into the wee hours.

Thankfully, our departure was uneventful! No doubt, in the near future, we will “enjoy” another saltwater trip – I just hope we are not again peppered with unexpected adventures. A few fish would be fine for a change!

Carol Oglesby from Grand Junction, Colorado, is a regular contributor to Flyfisher on female fly fishers’ interests. You may contact her at pcOglesby@bresnan.net.
AN OLD FISHING INJURY

By Jason Duncan

Sciatica is described by WebMD as “pain originating in the sciatic nerve, which runs from the lower back down the back of your legs. Symptoms of sciatica include burning in the leg, pain in the back of the leg when sitting, leg weakness, shooting pain, and more.”

Well, that doesn’t sound like something anybody would want.

Bent at the waist while still at the car tying on my wading boots in Cross River, New York, a sharp pain spread across the lower part of my back. As with any ache with a person older than 30, I did what we all do: I stood in one place and waited for it to go away, as it most surely would in a second or two. It got worse.

I tried to stand up. That was a mistake.

But being a macho man with my fly rod already strung up and fishable water close by, I chose to tough it out.

After wrangling myself into something vaguely resembling homo erectus posture, I strapped on my waist pack, collected my 4-weight and made my way to the river, hobbling like I’d just celebrated my 165th birthday.

These were spooky trout and I’m sure my bumbling through the brush hardly helped matters but, I finally managed to locate sporadically rising fish.

As any angler would ask: “But how to fish for them?”

This was a good question but only one of many. What is the hatch? What is the season? What is the weather? What is the best way to present a fly when my back, and now my right hip, feel as if the Devil himself is gnawing at it like it’s sinner barbecue in Hell’s cafeteria (which, of course, is located in the Fourth Circle, next to the break room)?

Additionally, I was also concerned, should I manage to catch a fish, how was I going to bend over to release the poor thing? These were all good questions.

From a standing position, it hurt to cast. From a crouched position, I could get around most of the shrubbery, but more importantly, my casting didn’t send searing pains from my shoulder blade down my spine through my hip flexor and into my knee. At least until I tried to stand up.

Everyone who has ever mentioned to me that fly fishing must be a highly relaxing enterprise has either never fished like this or they just weren’t doing it right.

I only lasted another 30 minutes before the pain got to be too much and I had to leave for home. I managed to claw my way back to the car using a found stick as a cane, stupidly forgetting that I had a perfectly good wading staff in my pack. (Unexpected pain can either dramatically raise or lower a person’s intellect in the moment.)

After an uncomfortable drive home, a Google search of my symptoms yielded results that pointed to sciatica, though several other results threatened cancer.
and/or death, as a Google search of any medical condition will. (Look up your runny nose, and more than a few of the answers will tell you that you’re likely to drop dead in a month, or you have a cold.)

So, naturally, as a fly fisherman, I then began wondering:

How am I going to keep fishing with sciatica?

Then the unthinkable: Will I be able to continue fishing at all?!

I couldn't sit. I couldn't stand. I couldn't walk or drive or cast or turn in a circle. I could still tie a fly to my leader, but what good did that do me if I couldn't pivot to reach my nippers or the fly float?

And if I had to give up fishing, what then? Golf?

I immediately considered the fishing-related activities still open to me.

Fly tying. I was fairly confident it would ruin my eyesight and put me in the poor house.

Making fly fishing related artwork (see above: “Abstract in Watercolor”). Well, sure, but did I have to do it all the time?

Writing humorous essays about fly fishing. Forget about it.

With all this weighing heavily on my mind, I went to see my doctor, who also happens to be an infectious disease specialist at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, which always makes me nervous he's going to find something unrelated to my visit that I would rather not know about.

His clinical analysis was understandably distressing. The diagnosis? I am a wimp.

For my “minor back strain,” I received an anti-inflammatory, a muscle relaxer, and a highly condescending side-eye from my physician, which was probably related to my pain threshold.

Feeling better already, I walked out of the doctor’s office wondering how I would describe to people what had happened. I decided on “an old fishing injury.”

I can just hear the awed responses now: “A fishing injury? What, did you drop your beer on your toe?”

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International Federation of Fly Fishers
2015 Awards

Order of the Lapis Lazuli Award
Philip Greenlee
Bruce Richards

Federator of the Year
Ron Winn

Frank and Jeanne Moore Award
Nathaniel P. Reed

Council Leadership Award
Jim Schramm

McKenzie Cup
Austin Fly Fishers
Lake Erie Chapter FFF

Buszek Memorial Award
Mike George

Dick Nelson Fly Tying Teaching Award
Fred DuPré

Darwin Atkin Memorial Fly Tying Achievement Award
Steve Jensen

IFFF Conservation Award
Tom Logan
Carl McNeil

Robert J. Marriott Scholarship Grant
Jason Tilley

Stanley Lloyd Conservation Award
Cumberland Valley TU/IFFF

Dr. James A. Henshall Warm Water Fisheries
Duane Hada

Roderick Haig-Brown Award
Jim Lichatowich

Lee Wulff Award
Tailwaters Fly Fishing

Silver King Award
Rick Pope

Lew Jewett Memorial Life Award
Ed Huff

Charles E. Brooks Memorial Life Award
Jerry Regan
Matt Bennett

Don Harger Memorial Life Award
Scott Hed

Arnold Gingrich Memorial Life Award
Richard Johnson
COUNCIL AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Eastern Rocky Mountain
Pat and Carol Oglesby
Tim Papich

Eastern Waters
Paul and Gail Gallo
Ray Markiewicz

Florida
Ken Hofmeister

Great Lakes
Bruce Pregler

Gulf Coast
Jeff Deuschle
Ken Koffel

Chesapeake
Don Waters
Bob Stouffer

North East
Brian McArdle

Northern California
Ed Huff

Ohio
Jim Stone

Oregon
Jim Crislip

South East
Robert Holliday

Southern
Steve Jensen

South West
Leigh Ann Swanson
Rick Proulx

Texas
Lee Yeager

Washington
Pat Peterman
Maura Johnson

Western Rocky Mountain
Peggy Kingery

CASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS AWARDS

Lifetime Achievement in Fly Casting
Steve Rajeff
Tim Rajeff

Mel Krieger Fly Casting Instructors Award
Steve Hollensed
Leslie Holmes

Floyd Franke Award For Contributions to the CICP
Al Buhr

Governor’s Pin
Chuck Easterling
Carl Zarelli
William Holmes
ORDER OF THE LAPIS LAZULI AWARD

The Order of the Lapis Lazuli Award is the highest honor in the International Federation of Fly Fishers (IFFF) and is not necessarily awarded each year. The award is for exemplary and individual achievement, and the selection is by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee. The recipient(s) receives a one-of-a-kind, specially designed gold ring with a lapis stone and the IFFF logo. Lapis lazuli is regarded as the stone of friendship and truth. The deep azure stone is said to encourage harmony in relationships and aid its wearer in authenticity and the ability to display his or her opinion openly.

The two people selected to receive this recognition are Philip Greenlee from Redding, California, and Bruce Richards from Bozeman, Montana. Nominated by former IFFF President Keith Groty, Greenlee’s attention to the IFFF’s financial management has given the organization the base from which to look to future growth and development with a sense of stability not enjoyed for a number of years. Greenlee’s growth as a “dedicated volunteer” had its start when he joined the fledgling organization in the late ’60s. As the years unfolded, his involvement grew with the organization – starting at the local level then expanding into the council’s business. He was council president and the lead member of the organizing committee for the Northern California Council’s successful Festival of Fly Fishing show in Redding during the early 2000s. He held this position for four years.

Good work seldom goes unnoticed, especially in a volunteer organization, and when the IFFF needed a strong leader in 2009 to help them pull out of financial disaster, Greenlee was asked to take the helm. He agreed to do so with the understanding he would run the organization like a business, allowing him to use his pre-retirement experience as a businessman and banker to the organization’s benefit. He started with an audit of the books to determine just how serious the economic situation really was, and then implemented measures to place the organization on a sound financial path. It took time and a lot of effort to bring the IFFF out of debt and into a continuous flow of black ink, but Greenlee was just the man to get the job done.

Along the path to financial stability, he also guided the IFFF into a position as a true international entity and changed its name from Federation of Fly Fishers to the International Federation of Fly Fishers. Today, after six years at the helm, the organization is out of debt and has a little over $1 million in its holdings. When Greenlee leaves office in 2016, the Federation will be ever changed. Because of his dedication to the
Phil Greenlee, left, and Bruce Richards were the 2015 recipients of the Order of the Lapis Lazuli Award.

organization he loves, Greenlee will have earned this award along with the Ambassador Award (2007) and Federator of the Year (2010).

The other recipient of the award was nominated by Great Lakes Council President Jim Schramm. Over the years, Bruce Richards has devoted thousands of hours working to improve casting skills within the organization and across the globe. He was part of the 1992 Casting Instructors Certification Program (CICP) organizing committee. During the early years, the newly formed group suffered growing pains. Due largely to Richards’ steady hand as a Casting Board of Governors (CBOG) member and later as its chair, the CICP became the world-class organization it is today.

All through the CICP’s growth, Richards was able to use his job with 3M/Scientific Anglers to strengthen the program while serving as a liaison between the fly fishing industry and the Federation of Fly Fishers. His retirement from the corporate world and the maturity of the CICP evolved within a short time of each other. Since retiring, Richards has moved to Bozeman, Montana, where he continues to teach fly casting and work to keep the IFFF’s CICP on strong footing. The addition of the Lapis Lazuli Award rounds out Richards’ successful fly casting career, which includes the Lew Jewett Memorial Life Award in 2004, Fly Rod & Reel’s 2007 Angler of the Year, and the Lifetime Achievement in Fly Casting Instruction award in 2008. He is a great instructor and a major contributor to the success of the CICP and the IFFF. Richards retired this year from the CBOG after 23 years of service; he was the last of the original founding members of the CBOG.

Both men have taken different paths to the highest award the IFFF can present to an individual. Because of these two men, the Federation is a financially strong, viable organization. They each took a different approach to help stabilize it when the road got rocky, but it’s because of them and many other hard-working volunteers that the IFFF remains a strong organization as the new millennium unfolds before us. The Federation is proud to recognize both Phil Greenlee and Bruce Richards with its highest award, the Order of the Lapis Lazuli Award. Our congratulations to them both!
FEDERATOR OF THE YEAR

The Federator of the Year Award is presented annually to an individual(s) who has demonstrated unusual devotion to the IFFF and through outstanding contributions has benefited the Federation as a national or international organization. This award is bestowed upon an individual for achievements wide in scope and not limited to local or regional activities. The criteria require devotion and contributions to the IFFF in order to be consistent with IFFF’s objectives. Additionally a minimum of five years membership and service is also required and that service should be voluntary rather than as a paid employee. Devotion and contribution to the organization should be consistent with IFFF objectives and be superior to those of other candidates. This year’s recipient, Ron Winn from Melbourne, Florida, is a most worthy recipient. Joining the Federation in 1988, longtime Floridian Ron Winn is considered one of the finest non-professional, saltwater fly fishers in the state. By profession he is a CPA and has often used those skills to benefit the organization as a treasurer. He started his volunteer career first on a local level serving two local clubs, then helped form the South East Council and finally served at a national level on the board of directors for the past six years.

Winn took over as IFFF treasurer at a time when the organization was in serious financial trouble. He worked very hard in the early days of his position to put practices in place to ensure proper reporting of financial data to the board of directors and accountability by the paid staff. He has been a cherished resource for his assistance and guidance in all financial matters related to the Federation. He has reviewed and reported on hundreds of financial reports that have been issued since his tenure began. If that’s not enough he survived two full audits and one review by an independent audit firm as well. The measures he put into place along with IFFF President Phil Greenlee have improved performance and
brought the organization from the brink of financial ruin to the present-day financial success.

Operations Manager Rhonda Sellers sums up his performance best by saying: “Most people don't know this, but at the Fair he is there when the registers close each day and personally counts all the money coming in. He helps me prepare the bank deposits throughout the entire event. It takes hours of his time away from his wife and his fun time at the Fair, but he does it because he wants the board of directors and our members to know that there is oversight. Quite frankly, I appreciate Ron’s oversight approach and would encourage any treasurer to do the same as the years unfold. It’s a protection for the staff and the volunteers to know that our treasurer has eyes on the treasury. It also should be a comfort to the board of directors to know he takes his job very seriously.”

IFFF President Greenlee reflects on Winn’s future: “Retirement won’t take Ron from us completely. He will continue to donate his time demonstrating and teaching saltwater fly tying. And he will be spreading the IFFF ethic of catch and release like he did on a recent trip to the Amazon River to catch peacock bass. He caught a lot of fish and, yes, he released all of his catch.”

Sellers continues sharing information about him: “Many people only see Ron as a nut-and-bolts accountant and don’t realize he has a creative side as well. He was the idea man behind the refreshed IFFF logo when he suggested that we put the world in the middle of the reel! He was also the idea man behind the cover on the recent 50-year Flyfisher magazine. He thought it would be a good idea to make the cover simple with Lee Wulff’s picture on the front, and, with his encouragement, that’s the decision the magazine committee adopted. Both sides of Ron Winn (creative and nuts-and-bolts) have benefited the IFFF in long-lasting ways. Unfortunately he is retiring from his position as treasurer. I will sorely miss his leadership and his calm approach to a very difficult and thankless job.”

Winn is one of those volunteers who gets things done and can be depended on to do what is needed with little or no direction. The organization is proud to recognize him with one of its highest honors, Federator of the Year. Good job, Ron, you deserve it!”
FRANK AND JEANNE MOORE AWARD
New IFFF Conservation Award

This new award was established to recognize an individual that has made an extraordinary contribution to the conservation of our fisheries resources and a notable contribution to community service. The recipient does not need to be affiliated with the Federation and can be recognized for a single outstanding contribution or for a continuous, prominent effort promoting conservation. The award need not be presented annually but is only given on an “as merited” basis.

Extraordinary contributions are those that are superior and conspicuous in relation to others and consistent with the philosophies of the Federation. They should be recognized on a regional or national basis, not just locally. The recipient will have made a significant contribution to the preservation and enhancement of those fisheries resources utilized in fly fishing. Recognition of contribution to the community should be through community service activities keeping with the spirit of Frank and Jeanne Moore and their contributions to their community and state.

The 2015 – and first – recipient of this prestigious award is the Honorable Nathaniel P. Reed from Hobe Sound, Florida, who has been a fierce advocate for wildlife and public land conservation for more than four decades. Serving throughout the Nixon and Ford administrations as the assistant secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks at the Department of the Interior, he played a key role in the negotiation and passage of many of our nation’s most crucial federal environmental laws and treaties. They include the Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Endangered Species Convention, key amendments to the Clean Water Act and the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act. Moreover, he was a strong defender of the National Wildlife Refuge and National Parks Systems, the Land and Water Conservation Fund and wetlands protection.

Reed was also actively engaged in the early Alaskan federal land use planning that lay the groundwork for the creation of more than 100 million acres of new national parks and wildlife refuges in that state. After leaving the government, his advocacy efforts continued through his work to save endangered Atlantic salmon and restore the Everglades. His accomplishments set a future benchmark for this award of the highest level. The IFFF is proud to present its first Frank and Jeanne Moore Award to him for his lifetime of conservation work and effort.
ARNOLD GINGRICH MEMORIAL LIFE AWARD

The Arnold Gingrich Memorial Life Award is presented to that person of outstanding achievement in any of several areas that are part of, or related to, the sport and science of fly fishing. Those areas include angling writing, original fly fishing theory, conservation and environmental protection, entomology, education in the sport of fly fishing, and innovation in the fly fishing techniques. This year’s recipient is Richard Johnson from Carrollton, Texas.

Texas Council President Russell Husted tells us in his nomination for this award: “Richard Johnson does so much to promote fly fishing in the state of Texas. On every weekend or opportunity that presents itself, Richard can be found teaching fly tying or fly casting, working on a conservation project, or helping the Dallas Fly Fishers IFFF club with any of their many projects. He has been a tireless worker for the organization for over 20 years. No one works harder than Richard, and he will influence so many in their lives.”

THE ROBERT J. MARRIOTT SCHOLARSHIP GRANT

A cash grant in the amount of $500 is presented annually to a deserving student in undergraduate or graduate biology, or a similar field and is specializing in fishery management.

Jason D. Tilley has been selected to receive this grant. For over 30 years, the research scientists at the University of Southern Mississippi – Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) have conducted research on diminished fisheries along our coast. The GCRL has been instrumental in bringing the Gulf strain striped bass back from the brink of extinction to the point where today there are breeding populations in several Gulf Coast rivers. Jason D. Tilley is a doctoral candidate working in this field. We hope the Robert J. Marriott Scholarship Grant will help him continue his studies.

LEE WULFF AWARD

This award is presented to recognize the business side of fly fishing. It is awarded to a business(es) that has shown outstanding innovation in the industry through their products, stewardship of water and fisheries resources, and a combination of both. This year the Lee Wulff Award goes to Tailwaters Fly Fishing (TFF), a retail store in Dallas, Texas.

TFF is a fly fishing, fly tying, education and conservation-minded organization and has been serving the Dallas community in this capacity for many years. They are the only fly shop in Texas with a full-service, in-house travel agency and an online store. There Travis Moore, who is a certified casting instructor, teaches many fly casting classes and was also instrumental in helping the Texas Council with its first fly fishing expo. The TFF crew visits clubs all across the state and speaks highly of the Federation. The store promotes the IFFF by having membership brochures on hand, posters of the various council activities, and donates to the Dallas Fort Worth area clubs on a regular basis.

Texas Council President Russell Husted was honored to nominate Tailwaters Fly Fishing for the Lee Wulff Award, and the IFFF is pleased to present the award to them. They are indicative of how a retail business can effectively partner with a nonprofit group to the benefit of both organizations while still providing great service to their customer base.
BUZ BUSZEK MEMORIAL AWARD

The Buz Buszek Memorial Award is presented annually to that person who has made significant contributions to the art of fly tying. The recipient may be either an amateur or a professional who displays tying skills, creativity and innovation, and shares knowledge by teaching or publication. Achievements and contributions should promote the advancements of the art and qualification should be superior to other candidates.

Mike George from Olathe, Kansas, is this year’s recipient. Among those familiar with George’s work, he is considered to be at the pinnacle of those fly tiers who stack and trim deer hair. One of the judging criteria for this award is creativity or innovation. It is important to note that every one of George’s flies is of his own design. In some instances he has devoted years to the development of a particular pattern including pioneering new tying techniques. Fly framing guru Steve Jensen tells us, “I personally know of no individual with the creative talents of Mike.”

One of several judging criteria listed for this award is fly tying skills. Fly tying awards received by George are significant. He entered the Federation’s 2006 fly tying competition and received both first and second place awards. He has been recognized as the Southern Council’s Fly Tier of the Year twice, which is rare. But his most significant recognition has been at the prestigious Mustad Scandinavian Open Fly Tying Competition, the world’s premier international fly tying contest. George has entered one of his unique flies during each of the past 11 years in the Open Category, and he has received eight gold medals and two silver medals. No other fly tier
Mike George has earned more gold medals in the Open Category than Mike George. In addition, he entered a single pattern in the Dry Fly Category at the same competition and won a gold medal for that fly as well.

As strong as his credentials are for the previous two judging criteria, his greatest strength lies in his teaching and sharing of knowledge with others. Specifically he demonstrates at numerous fly fishing shows as far away as Elverum, Norway, and all through the United States. George teaches many fly tying classes and workshops around the world and also on a frequent basis at the K and K Fly Shop near his home. His teaching includes classes with the Boy Scouts of America and Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing in the Kansas City area.

It is important to note that although George's specialty is using deer hair, he is also adept at teaching and tying most cold, warm and saltwater patterns. His flies have been featured in several national magazines including Flyfisher, Fly Tyer, Fly Fishing and Tying Journal, and the Art of Angling.

Most recently, George produced his first instructional video, “Deer Hair Sculptures.” In it he demonstrates his unique techniques of tying two popular deer hair flies: a popper and a diver. He is currently working on a second video that will cover more of his techniques.

Another significant aspect of his credentials is the manner in which he supports various groups through his fly tying. His flies are true works of art and are appealing to collectors. It is not unusual for a single Mike George fly to bring as much as $500 in an auction. He is very generous in donating his flies to support good causes like the IFFF along with its clubs and councils, Trout Unlimited, Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Reel Recovery, Good Samaritan Boys Ranch, Casting for Recovery, and the Jose Wejebe Foundation.

We could continue with examples of Mike George's talent and generosity, but by now you must see he is most qualified for this award. It isn't something George expected but always wanted; he feels it is recognition of his efforts in the IFFF and he is deeply honored to be the recipient.
THE MCKENZIE CUP

The McKenzie Cup is given to the IFFF club(s) that has made the most outstanding contribution to the organization. This year the organization is proud to award the McKenzie Cup to two great clubs. They are the Austin Fly Fishers from Austin, Texas, and the Lake Erie Chapter – FFF from West Seneca, New York.

The Austin Fly Fishers (AFF) formed in 1998 and has been the voice of fly fishing in central Texas ever since. It is a charter club that was the recipient of an IFFF conservation grant destined to help with a catch-and-release project located at nearby Kelly Lake. Last year the club was also the recipient of the Stanley Lloyd Award to recognize it as conservation club of the year. Another of their important projects is called Soldiers’ Kids Involved in Fishing Fun (SKIFF). This program is designed to help children at Fort Hood deal with the absence of a parent(s) who is deployed away from their home base. The AFF also supports the Texas Fly Fishing Expo and has helped other smaller clubs in central Texas.

Founder of the Lake Erie Chapter (LEC), Ray Markiewicz had a vision to help teach young people the art of fly fishing. Five years ago, under President David Rosner, the late Ray Markiewicz’s dream became a reality. What started as Kid’s Day is now known as the Ray Markiewicz Memorial Kid’s Day, better known as “Ray’s Day.” Each year, this ever-growing event focuses on teaching entomology, fly tying and fly casting. This is taught by volunteers and members, including Ronald Ziarnowski, last year’s Lew Jewett award winner. The chapter recently established a memorial scholarship in Ray’s honor. This is for undergrad college students, whose curriculum is in the environmental or fisheries studies.

Phil Greenlee, right, presents one of two McKenzie Cup Awards to David and Joan Rosner from the Lake Erie Chapter of the IFFF.
The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation environmental educator assistant, Mike Adriaansen, saw firsthand the dedication of this club from its Ray's Day seminar. He then invited the club to participate in the annual Reinstein Woods Fall Festival, where more than 4,000 visitors spend the day at the site. (Members demonstrate fly casting and fly tying.) Some of the other projects of LEC include fish stocking, on-stream demonstrations, volunteering for Project Healing Waters, assisting at Cabela's and Orvis fly tying seminars, and many more. A yearly, weeklong outing at Salmon River in Pulaski, New York, allows for the camaraderie to continue.

The IFFF appreciates all that these two clubs accomplish and wonder what they do in their spare time. We're only joking and are very proud to recognize two of the best-of-the-best clubs with the McKenzie Cup Award.

The second McKenzie Cup Award went to the Austin Fly Fishers pictured here with Phil Greenlee. In the photo, left to right, are Jim Gray (president), Matt Bennett, Phil Greenlee, Jeff Hoelter and Carroll Hall.
DARWIN ATKIN MEMORIAL AWARD

This award was created to recognize an IFFF member whose long-term contribution to fly tying is widely recognized and respected. This award is for outstanding achievement and demonstrated commitment of the person in significantly advancing the craft and art of fly tying. To preserve the integrity and prestige of this award, it is recommended that it be awarded judiciously and infrequently, but it is not intended that the frequency stipulation deprive a truly deserving individual.

Steve Jensen from Springfield, Missouri, is the first recipient of this award, which is named after his longtime friend and mentor in the fly tying, fly framing and fundraising disciplines. Over the years, Darwin Atkin and Steve Jensen raised many thousands of dollars to support Federation causes.

Jensen is a member of the IFFF who has made long-term contributions to fly tying since he was a young man; he has been a life member of the organization since 1985. He was the founding president of the Southwest Missouri Fly Fishers and has served in the Southern Council as treasurer, vice president and president. He also served as a national director and an IFFF senior adviser. While serving in those positions, he also devoted his time to promoting excellence in the art of fly tying and displaying that art.

Jensen has been published numerous times, has received his master’s degree (thesis: “The Mayflies of Idaho”), doctoral degree (thesis: “Generic Revision of the Heptageniidae”) from the University of Utah, and co-authored the book “The Mayflies of North and Central America” along with George F. Edmunds Jr. and Lewis Berner in 1976. He also provided the illustrations for this widely used reference. The linkage of this book to ones written by others in the fly fishing world is extensive. Malcom Knoop, in his “Mayflies: An Anglers Study of Trout
Water Ephemeroptera," thanks Jensen for reviewing and correcting his text, as does Mike Lawson in his "Spring Creek" book. Ernest Schwiebert refers to his expertise in “Nymphs Volume I: The Mayflies: The Major Species," as have many other fly fishing writers. Jensen is an important scientific link between the IFFF’s fly fishing community members and getting the entomology correct in publications. Former Buszek Memorial Award Recipient Judy Lehmberg tells us: “On a personal level, he and his book have helped me innumerable times when I was undecided as to a mayfly species identification. His illustrations and text in 'The Mayflies of North and Central America' allow even a non-entomologist like me to find the species identification answers, and if there is any doubt, an e-mail to Steve puts me right.”

Jensen has demonstrated his diverse fly tying abilities at local clubs, regional shows, Southern and Southeastern council conclaves, and the International Fly Fishing Fair. He ties flies for cold water, warm water and salt water, and perfects them by fishing them. He proves his tarpon flies are effective by fishing them in Mexico, then tinkers with their construction until they do what he wants. He willingly shares his expertise and experience when demonstrating these flies.

Steve Jensen is a true gentleman in every sense of the word. Darwin Atkin would be proud to know Steve is the first recipient of an award named after him. All who are in the fly tying community congratulate him for this prestigious recognition. Good job, Steve!
LEW JEWETT MEMORIAL LIFE AWARD

The Lew Jewett Memorial Award is presented annually to those who have done one of these things: made efforts to bring more people into the sport of fly fishing and enhanced their knowledge and ability; devoted energy toward youth education; has been an innovator in equipment and techniques; has been a proven teacher; has made a contribution to the preservation and enhancement of fisheries; has made a contribution to organizations or has made a contribution to our biological knowledge of the sport and habitat.

This year’s recipient, Ed Huff from Union City, California, has been a member of the IFFF for many years and began his journey toward this award as a team member when Mission Peak Fly Anglers (MPFA) started presenting Trout in the Classroom in 2008. Huff’s strength is in his artistry utilizing Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop. In 2009 MPFA’s team realized that they could be much more effective with some sort of a projected media, so they elected to utilize PowerPoint and turned to Huff for help. He used his skill as a graphic artist to develop a series of five PowerPoint presentations focused on pre-school through middle school students. Those presentations are the Aquarium, the Life Cycle of the Trout, Habitats, What Trout Eat and Watersheds.

The five presentations are stunningly beautiful and were so well received by the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW), it produced several thousand of them for use in a program they call Classroom Aquarium Education Project (www.wildlife.ca.gov/caep). The CDFW has made these PowerPoint presentations available on a nationwide basis.

Not only has Huff worked on those presentations, but he also developed three posters on anatomy, trout foods and habitats. The PowerPoint presentation along with the posters resulted in the CDFW nominating the Northern California Council (NCC) for the Aquatic Resource Educators Association annual award. The Council received this prestigious award in 2012.

The NCC was proud to nominate Ed Huff for the Lew Jewett Memorial Award, and the IFFF was even prouder to recognize him with it. He is a most worthy recipient.
IFFF COUNCIL LEADERSHIP AWARD

The IFFF Council Leadership Award is presented to an individual for outstanding contributions at the council level. The 2015 recipient is James Schramm from Pentwater, Michigan. He has a long and distinguished record with the Federation at the council level and at the national level as the organization’s legal counsel. Because this is an award for recognition of accomplishments at the council level, we’ll focus in that direction.

Since its formation in 1980, the Great Lakes Council (GLC) and its clubs have been involved in numerous projects on rivers and lakes in Michigan and Indiana. It has played a major role in bringing catch-and-release regulations to streams in Michigan. Significant among these are sections on the main stem of the Au Sable, the South Branch of the Au Sable and the Pere Marquette. The Michigan DNR seeks the input of the IFFF and GLC on all fishing regulation proposals.

For more than 25 years, the council has been part of the Oversight Committee for the Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition (MHRC). These efforts resulted in several settlement agreements with hydro owners involving more than 30 hydro projects in Michigan. Key parts of the settlement agreements included habitat improvement funds that have provided hundreds of thousands of dollars for habitat projects on the watersheds where the hydro projects are located.

In his “spare time” Schramm has helped the GLC with its Fly Fishing School & Fair (past 25 years) and the Fly Tying Expo (past 15 years). Both events focus on education programs, fly tying demonstrations, classes and workshops for the beginner, intermediate and advanced fly anglers covering all aspects of fly fishing.

If the mentioned accomplishments sound impressive, remember they are due to a man who has been in a major leadership role guiding this successful council in all aspects since its formation. This award brings into focus the difference a really great leader can make in an organization. In the GLC, Jim Schramm is that leader! 🦆
The Dick Nelson Fly Tying Teaching Award is presented to an individual who excels in teaching the art of fly tying to all skill levels. The recipient must be able to demonstrate and teach the varied skills of fly tying, and be able to teach techniques developed by others and themselves and have experience teaching in both group and individual environments.

Fred DuPré is the 2015 award recipient. At the time of his nomination he was from Colleyville, Texas, but he recently moved to Flippin, Arkansas. For many years he has shown great leadership in the field of fly tying innovation and teaching. He demonstrates at almost every major event locally, in the Midwest, and at the national IFFF meetings. One of those regional events is the annual Sowbug Roundup in Mountain Home, Arkansas, each spring. It is one of the premier fly tying events in the United States. In addition, DuPré is past president of the Dallas Fly Fishers, an active member of the Fort Worth Fly Fishers, a member of the United Kingdom Fly Dressers Guild, and is on the Whiting Farms Pro Team.

DuPré has been a volunteer worker at the Southern Council events for decades and has enough patterns of his own design to make him eligible to publish a book. He gives freely of his time to clubs all over the Texas Council, the Southern Council and the Gulf Coast Council. When he moved to the Northern Arkansas Fly Fishers, he left a vacuum in the North Texas area. DuPré often led the Wednesday advanced fly tying lessons at the local Bass Pro store, where many of the area’s best tiers congregate to learn, enjoy, and share knowledge and tying style. It would be accurate to say that thousands of people have watched DuPré demonstrate, and many of them have learned or advanced their skills from his efforts.

Join us in welcoming Fred DuPré to the elite group of fly tying teachers who personify the best-of-the-best fly tying instructor. He is your 2015 Dick Nelson Fly Tying Teaching Award recipient.
DR. JAMES A. HENSHALL WARMWATER FISHERIES AWARD

This award is made in memory of Dr. James Henshall for his many contributions to warmwater fisheries. The award may be made to an individual, a club, a group or other organization for extraordinary achievements in conservation of warmwater fisheries. An individual or club must be a member of the IFFF but a group need not be a Federation affiliate. The nominee(s) should have directed a warmwater fisheries conservation project that makes a significant contribution to the protection, restoration or enhancement of a warmwater fishery. Duane Hada from Mountain Home, Arkansas is this year’s recipient.

Duane Hada writes as part of his nomination: “My childhood days were filled with wading the cool, bluff-lined streams casting for brownies (smallmouth bass). I can’t think of a better way to have channeled my youthful energies and fueled my creative desires.”

Developed over 30 years ago, the Hada Creek Crawler Crawdad fly pattern’s success quickly led to Hada becoming an invited tier at many IFFF shows. His innovations at the vise, including patterns such as the “Hada’s Craft Fur Clouser,” led to his inclusion as a contract fly pattern designer for Umpqua Feather Merchants. Hada holds a bachelor’s degree in art from the University of Central Arkansas. Hada’s Rivertown Gallery and White River School of Fine Art showcase his award-winning fine art. The Arkansas State University–Mountain Home houses a collection of 45 of Hada’s original watercolor paintings, depicting scenes along the White River. He is currently working on a long-duration commission of murals to adorn the walls of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Nature Centers across the state.

In 2012, Hada and his brother, Ken, co-authored, “The River White – A Confluence of Brush and Quill,” a tribute to the White River in watercolor and poetry. Duane’s ethereal watercolors and Ken’s award-winning poems resonate with the fly fishers who love the region’s streams and rivers.

We could continue with Hada’s accomplishments because they are many, but we think you get the idea; he really does deserve this prestigious award. The last time it was presented was 2004, so now 11 years later we once again recognize an individual for his efforts on behalf of warmwater fisheries. Duane, your efforts do the award proud!
The IFFF Conservation Award is presented to individuals, groups or organizations that have made extraordinary contributions to the conservation of fisheries resources. The award could be based on a single outstanding contribution or on a continuous prominent effort promoting conservation. This year two people are being recognized with this award. They are Tom Logan from Tallahassee, Florida, and Carl McNeil from Albert Town, Wanaka, New Zealand.

Tom Logan is a retired certified wildlife biologist who specialized for more than 45 years in research, recovery and management of threatened and endangered species. He is an IFFF life member, certified casting instructor, chairperson of the Fly Tying Group, senior adviser to the board of directors and vice president of conservation for the Florida Council. He is an advocate of using all of our opportunities, be it casting, fly tying or fishing, to emphasize the important role of conservation in all of these activities to protect and preserve our fisheries. Logan’s most recent contribution to conservation was to head a subcommittee focused on rewriting the IFFF’s Conservation Policy Plan. He wrote the final draft that is currently being reviewed by the board of directors. Tom Logan’s conservation work has earned him a special place in the organization’s conservation world.

Carl McNeil is an IFFF master casting instructor, based on New Zealand’s South Island. Several years ago on a fishing trip, he ended up at Aitutaki Lagoon on one of the Cook Islands. At the time of his visit, there was no sporting development on the island. The local economy was supported by a net fishing business run by the Davy family, including son Itu. The family operation was responsible for some enormous and devastating catches of bonefish, Itu’s father and brothers constituted the total workforce. The pressure on the fishery was drastically depleting the bonefish population. Carl McNeil decided to help Itu learn to work as a catch-and-release, fly fishing bonefish guide. Long story cut short, the Aitutaki bonefish project became a major success, with deep and far reaching impact on the entire island.

Carl McNeil from South Island New Zealand, one of the recipients of the 2015 IFFF Conservation Award.
Though living in very different parts of the world, both Logan and McNeil are bringing major contributions to the conservation world. They both are a credit to the organization and excellent choices for the top IFFF conservation award. Our congratulations to them both!

**STANLEY LLOYD CONSERVATION AWARD**

This is an award for IFFF clubs working on conservation projects. The project must be related to fisheries enhancement and preservation. Applicants or nominees must be active IFFF Affiliate Clubs. The award is presented for a completed or planned project that is fishery related and focused on conservation, enhancement and preservation. The club is to provide “matching funds” for the project of at least 50 percent of the total value of the project. This year Chesapeake Council President Justin Pittman nominated the Cumberland Valley TU/IFFF (CVTU) club from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, for this highly cherished award.

Founded in 1969 by notable anglers Vince Marinaro, Charlie Fox, Ed Shenk and Jim Bashline (first Flyfisher magazine editor), the CVTU has compiled a distinguished 45-year record in advancing the sport of fly fishing while conserving, protecting and restoring the historic sport fisheries in Pennsylvania's Cumberland Valley. Its annual Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp plus the historic end-of-the-season “Last Supper” are testaments to the organization's commitment to fly fishing fellowship. The annual “Street to Streams Program for Disadvantaged and Probationary Youth” is a two-day fishing camp where the club partners with various local governmental agencies to introduce 10 to 15 “at risk” juveniles to the sport of fly fishing. Another program is EAGLES (Expeditionary Anglers Groups for Leader Enhancement). It is a joint effort between the CVTU and the U.S. Army War College. Both programs are highly successful.

At other times the club focuses on conservation with projects throughout the Cumberland Valley. They include restoration on Big Spring Creek plus various projects on Letort Spring Run and the Yellow Breeches. There are many other projects too numerous to mention here, but suffice it to say the CVTU club is a most worthy recipient of this award. The club represents the Federation well!
CHARLES E. BROOKS MEMORIAL LIFE AWARD

The Charles E. Brooks Memorial Life Award goes to an individual who demonstrates a deep affection for the outdoors, is an innovative fly tier, has some background in writing books or magazine articles, is a member of the IFFF, and has some history of serving at banquets, seminars or regional conclaves. The recipient should have the enthusiasm of Charles and be “a character.” Two people are this year’s recipients. They are Matt Bennett from Round Rocks, Texas, and Jerry Regan from Swartz Creek, Michigan.

Keira Quam from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) nominated Matt Bennett because he often attended events with the Texas Women’s Fly Fishers to support the TPWD. At those events he taught the public to fly fish and tie flies. Quam tells us: “When I started teaching courses at TPWD, I needed to learn how to tie flies and Matt was there to help. Our deal was that he would not laugh at me whenever I called for help, and he has been a man of his word – most of the time!” Bennett creates flies that catch fish and often shares his creations at fly tying events like the annual Ed Rizzolo Fly Tying function in Houston.

Great Lakes Council President Jim Schramm nominated Jerry Regan for this award because of his outstanding contributions for the past 30 years to the IFFF and the Great Lakes Council (GLC). His organizational skills and untiring support for the GLC’s Fly Fishing School & Fair and the GLC Fly Fishing Expo has made these annual events a showcase of the IFFF’s education and conservation efforts. Regan generously shares his knowledge and has been instrumental in the preservation of Michigan’s fly tying methods and history.

Both of these men from different corners of our country do an excellent job of representing the goals of this award and the Federation. Their accomplishments would make the award’s namesake Charlie Brooks proud.
SILVER KING AWARD

The IFFF saltwater award is named after the highly prized saltwater trophy, the tarpon. The Silver King Award is presented to an individual who has made extraordinary contributions to the sport of saltwater angling over an extended period of time. The nominee may or may not be a professional in the sport, must be an IFFF member, must have a history of unselfish promotion of saltwater fly fishing and have practiced the sport for many years. The nominee must also meet one or preferably more of the following requirements as applied to saltwater fly fishing: Be an educator, conservationist, innovator, writer, speaker or expert in the sport. The award need not be presented annually, but should only be presented when a truly deserving individual is nominated.

This year the Texas Council nominated Rick Pope from Dallas. It will reward him for all he does for saltwater fly fishing and for his support of the IFFF. Pope has fished all over the world and has a huge passion for saltwater fly fishing. He has joined with some of the best saltwater anglers to make the sport better, developed innovative products, promoted the sport through retail advertising, has designed new gear that takes saltwater fly fishing to another level, and really brings the sport into a frontline focus with the angling public.

He is a lifetime member of the IFFF and is currently serving on the national board of directors. He was instrumental in the formation of the Texas Council, supporting it with advice, retail backing, staff support and as a mentor.

Pope is at home while fishing the salt, and he cares so much for the sport. Time on the water is special to him, and he shares the experience with many other anglers. We are pleased to recognize him with the Silver King Award.
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN FLY CASTING INSTRUCTION AWARD

The Lifetime Achievement in Fly Casting Instruction Award is given by the IFFF Casting Board of Governors in recognition of those who have made significant contributions to the art of fly casting instruction. Recipients are chosen based on their sustained contributions to fly casting instruction in many areas such as teaching, innovation in fly casting techniques, writing, motivation, sharing their knowledge of teaching, and development of the Casting Instructors Certification Program. Brothers Steve and Tim Rajeff are the 2015 recipients of this important casting award.

When it comes to delivering long casts or dropping a fly on a dime, nobody in the world does it better than Steve Rajeff. He has no less than 38 national and 14 world All Round Championships on his casting resume. Steve holds or has held all national records, except one held by his brother Tim. Tim Rajeff cast a perfect 300 out of 300 in fly accuracy during the National Championship in San Francisco during the 1980s (Steve has hit 299 on multiple occasions). Tim has received a gold medal in the World Casting Games in single-hand distance as well as winning the national overall fly accuracy and distance championship. Steve has held the single-hand fly distance record of 243 feet since 1973, and for nearly 30 years he held the two-hand fly distance record at 290 feet (recently broken by a 292-foot cast). Steve and Tim were winning teammates in the first running of the Outdoor Life Network Flyfishing Masters Championship (trout fishing).

The two brothers make their living in the fly fishing industry. Steve is the director of engineering for G.Loomis rod manufacturing, using his casting and fishing experience to hone rod performance characteristics. Tim is the owner of Rajeff Sports, a small company that currently distributes Echo fly rods to the world and Airflo fly lines to North America. Over the years both brothers have guided – Steve in Montana and Tim in Russia and Montana.

The Lifetime Achievement in Fly Casting Award deservedly recognizes the Rajeff brothers for their excellent fly casting and teaching skills. In the past, Mel Krieger, founder of the Casting Instructors Certification Program (CICP), was one of the first four recipients of this important casting award. Interestingly enough, years later two of Mel’s former students are being recognized for their contribution to the CICP and the sport of fly casting. We are pleased to acknowledge Steve and Tim Rajeff for a lifetime of giving so much time and passion to fly casters the world over.
CASTING BOARD OF GOVERNOR’S PIN

The chair of the Casting Board of Governors (CBOG) awards Governor's Pins in recognition of exemplary contributions in support of the Casting Instructors Certification Program (CICP) in areas of administration, committee involvement, or program implementation.

In 2015, three Governor's Pins were awarded to Chuck Easterling (Jonesboro, Arkansas), Carl Zarelli (University Place, Washington), and William Holmes from the United Kingdom in recognition of their contributions to the CICP. CBOG Chairperson Rick Williams from Boise, Idaho, made the presentations at the Awards Banquet in Bend, Oregon, on August 12, 2015. Easterling and Zarelli were both in attendance, while Holmes was not. Chairperson Williams delivered the pin to Holmes when he later visited the United Kingdom.

IFFF PRESIDENT’S PINS

The president of the IFFF presents pins annually to individuals who have assisted him during his term in office. These are people who the president can depend on to be there to offer him and the organization assistance. President Phil Greenlee made presentations to Mary Ann Dozer, Karen Kreft, Eric Steele, Sherry Steele (all from Sisters, Oregon), Robin Healy (from Portland, Oregon), Charlie Renn (from Corvallis, Oregon) and Carl Ronk (from Pomona, California).

Chair Sherry Steele with husband Eric receive the President’s Pin from Phil Greenlee for their hard work in making the 2015 Fly Fishing Fair a roaring success.
MEL KRIEGER FLY CASTING INSTRUCTORS AWARD

The Mel Krieger Fly Casting Instructors Award is presented by the Casting Board of Governors (CBOG) in recognition of those who have made significant contributions to the IFFF Casting Instructors Certification Program (CICP), dedicated themselves to fly casting instruction, and shared their knowledge and enthusiasm for casting with others. This year the CBOG selected two people to receive this important casting award: Steve Hollensed from Tom Bean, Texas, and Leslie Holmes from Boca Grande, Florida.

Hollensed has dedicated himself to being a diligent and dedicated student of the cast, as well as a capable instructor, who effectively shares his knowledge with others no matter what their level of fly casting skill. Drawing from his years as a school teacher, he excels in patiently teaching, sharing knowledge and motivating his students. As chairman of the Texas Council’s casting program, he recently organized an amazing casting event at the Texas Fly Fishing Expo, bringing well-known instructors like Joe Libeu, Chuck Easterling and Rick Williams to help teach the classes. Due to his program, the council has gained a new master casting instructor, Bob Garber, and a new certified casting instructor, Chris Johnson.

In his spare time, Hollensed visits Texas clubs to teach, give casting lessons and presentations. He is an Orvis-endorsed fly fishing guide who gives casting lessons as part of its customer service. If Hollensed has a fly rod, he is teaching, fishing or most likely both.

Holmes is a relative newcomer to IFFF and the CBOG, having immigrated to Florida from Ireland last year. He brought a wealth of knowledge with him, much to the benefit of IFFF and the CICP, and exemplifies the attributes of this award. His depth of knowledge about casting and instructions is remarkable, and it is freely and generously given to many students and peers. Holmes serves on several CBOG committees including the Two-handed Casting Instructor (THCI) Committee where he is the chairperson. Holmes’ familiarity with
Holmes’ skills as an instructor are remarkable, and he is now drawing students and aspiring instructors from across the southeastern United States, as well as visitors from the United Kingdom, many who are fellow APGAI instructors preparing for IFFF certifications. Holmes is generous and passionate about fly casting, always seeking to improve in his own casting and teaching.

Both Steve Hollensed and Leslie Holmes are a credit to IFFF and to the CICP. Both individuals exemplify the selfless dedication and enthusiasm that is appropriate for this special award named in honor of Mel Krieger, a founding member of the program.

Photos by BT’s Photography

Leslie Holmes, left, and Steve Hollensed, right, receive the Mel Krieger Fly Casting Instructors Award from Rick Williams, center.
FLOYD FRANKE AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CICP

Floyd Franke advanced the mission of the Casting Instructors Certification Program (CICP) on several levels through his contributions as a governor and later as the chairperson of the Casting Board of Governors (CBOG). Franke foresaw that high standards must be maintained and laid the foundation for the Code of Conduct to ensure this was the case. He also established the Ethics Committee, the Two-handed Casting Instructor program, governor membership terms, and opened Casting Board of Governors (CBOG) committees and CICP activities to participation by master casting instructors. This year the first presentation of this award goes to Al Buhr from Salem, Oregon, who has demonstrated Floyd Franke traits and qualities while making significant contributions to the CICP.

During his 20 years on the CBOG, Buhr greatly impacted not only the casting instructor program as a whole, but grew the Two-handed Casting Instructor program as well. He believed in the CICP mission: improve the quality of fly casting instruction throughout the world, including educating and mentoring all persons involved in fly fishing. Buhr joined the CBOG in 1994 with the goal of starting a two-handed certification. He started his march toward his goal by joining Mel Krieger’s Spey instructor committee in 1999. Finally in 2003, the Two-handed Casting Instructor (THCI) test

PHOTO BY RICK WILLIAMS

Floyd Franke Award recipient Al Buhr
was approved and testing began in 2004. Buhr certified early in the first year, along with 13 other instructors, and then promptly became chair of the THCI committee and remained in that position until 2011. During his time as chair of the committee he grew the number of THCIs to 89 worldwide – with eight of them as current members of CBOG. He retired in 2014 knowing the THCI was a success.

Throughout his 20 years on the CBOG, Buhr was active in the annual gatherings, taught classes and attended the organization’s meetings. As a CBOG member, Buhr kept his ego in check while keeping the bylaws, codes of conduct and ethics close at hand. His voice was heard regardless of politics or peer influence. He was an active examiner around the world and today, even in retirement, Buhr volunteers his skills as an instructor at many fly fishing clubs throughout the Northwest.

All students who have been fortunate enough to have taken or observed one of Buhr’s classes understand his unique, dances-with-a-two-handed-rod teaching style. His use of metaphors is extensive; his humor keeps things upbeat; and his body language fuels engagement. Buhr always kept the mission of the IFFF and the CICP in the forefront along with the student’s needs. His impact will be forever embedded in the history and future of the IFFF and its casting instructor program. He is a most worthy recipient of the first Floyd Franke Award for contributions to the CICP. Buhr’s accomplishments set a high benchmark for future candidates.
RODERICK HAIG-BROWN AWARD

The Roderick Haig-Brown Award is presented to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to angling literature. The award is presented to an author of a book, books, or combination of articles and books that embody the philosophy of Roderick Haig-Brown. This year’s recipient is Jim Lichatowich from Columbia City, Oregon.

Lichatowich enjoyed a long career as a fisheries biologist for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), where he eventually served as chief of the research division. In the late 1980s he left ODFW to work as a private consultant on Pacific salmon recovery issues. His essays on salmon recovery have appeared in a variety of publications, including Trout magazine, Peninsula magazine, Riverkeeper and Sherkin Comment. He was one of the authors of the landmark report on Columbia River salmon recovery, “Return to the River,” published in 2006 by Elsevier Press.

Lichatowich is a previous IFFF Leopold Award recipient (2003) for his significant contributions to the management and recovery of Pacific salmon. Since that award, he has retired and written two insightful books on Pacific salmon. They are “Salmon Without Rivers: A History of the Pacific Salmon Crisis” (1999) and “Salmon, People, and Place: A Biologist’s Search for Salmon Recovery” (2013).

“Salmon Without Rivers” presents a history of the Pacific salmon crisis and won the Washington Governor’s Book Award in 2000. It offers a biologist’s view of the salmon crisis in the Pacific Northwest and the failure of restoration efforts that have concentrated on returning salmon to the rivers without understanding the cause of the fish’s decline. In his follow-up book “Salmon, People, and Place,” Lichatowich eloquently exposes the misconceptions underlying salmon management and recovery programs that have fueled the catastrophic decline in Northwest salmon populations for more than a century.

Lichatowich is presently at work on a third book on salmon recovery. It will explore the relationship of fisheries managers with natural resources and describe how fundamental changes in perceptions, undergraduate/graduate school curricula, and management decision processes could lead to a new model for salmon recovery. His commitment to salmon and their ecosystems reflects the perceptive, philosophical writing of Roderick Haig-Brown. Jim Lichatowich is a worthy recipient of this award for his contributions to salmon recovery and the introspective writing that challenges us every day to do more for Pacific Northwest salmon and steelhead habitats.

Jim Lichatowich accepts the Roderick Haig-Brown Award from Rick Williams, left, and Glenn Erikson.
Thank You

The International Federation of Fly Fishers wishes to thank all the sponsors, donors and volunteers who made this event a great success!

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2015 Photo Contest Winners
By Pat Oglesby

FLY ANGLERS IN THEIR ELEMENT
1st: “Fighting a Really Nice Trout” by Arkadiusz Kubale of Wroclaw, Poland. Location: Bobr River, Lower Silesia, Poland

2nd: “Burn No Bridges” by Arkadiusz Kubale of Wroclaw, Poland. Location: Lower Silesia, Poland

3rd: “Walk Softly & Carry a Long Stick” by Arkadiusz Kubale of Wroclaw, Poland. Location: The Izera, Southwest Poland

INTERNATIONAL FLY FISHING EXPERIENCES
1st: “Grayling from the San” by Arkadiusz Kubale of Wroclaw, Poland. Location: Bieszczady Mountains, Southeast Poland

2nd: “The Night Brown Trout from the Dunajec” by Arkadiusz Kubale of Wroclaw, Poland. Location: Pieniny Mountains, South Poland

3rd: “Autumn Reflections” by Peter Brooks of Tasmania, Australia. Location: Brumbys Creek

NATIVE FISH OF NORTH AMERICA
1st: “Beaverhead River Rainbow” by Janet Downey of Boise, Idaho. Location: Beaverhead River, Montana

2nd: “Big Hole River Rainbow” by Marty Downey of Boise, Idaho. Location: Big Hole River, Montana

3rd: “Beaverhead River Rainbow Too Big for the Net!” by Janet Downey of Boise, Idaho. Location: Beaverhead River, Montana

PEOPLE’S CHOICE AWARD
“Fighting a Really Nice Trout” by Arkadiusz Kubale of Wroclaw, Poland. Location: Bobr River, Lower Silesia, Poland

GRAND PRIZE JUDGE’S CHOICE
“Grayling from the San” by Arkadiusz Kubale of Wroclaw, Poland. Location: Bieszczady Mountains, Southeast Poland
“Beaverhead River Rainbow” by Janet Downey
The Night Brown Trout from the Dunajec by Arkadiusz Kubale
"The Night Brown Trout from the Dunajec" by Arkadiusz Kubale
Main house 4,140 sq. ft. • Garage/Shop 2,720 sq. ft.
4-bay garage 1,870 sq. ft. • Guest cabin & porch with bathhouse
Complete outdoor kitchen with Viking grill
Party house (heated/cooled) with porch and fireplace

No expense was spared for this trout fishing experience! The 3.96-acre property has over 350 ft. of shoreline on the beautiful, crystal clear North Fork River. A series of decks and patios, along with a complete outdoor kitchen, provides abundant space for outdoor living and entertaining. View eagles, turkey and deer in their natural habitat.

• This property is the definition of riverside luxury!
• North Fork River – one of the world’s best trout fishing rivers
• 15 minutes to Mt. Home • 10 minutes to Norfork Lake
• 10 minutes to National Forest for excellent turkey hunting!

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