



Flies and Lies

Newsletter of the Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida

December, 2021

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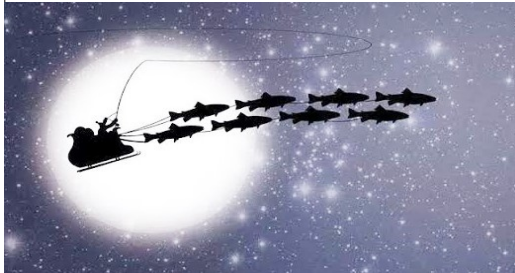
NEWSLETTER

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Business Meeting
1ST Tuesday, 7 PM

Bull Session - Tying
2ND Thursday, 6 PM

Clinic -Casting, Tying,
Lunch - 3RD Saturday
9 AM



Christmas Party December 14

Scenic Hills Country Club
8891 Burning Tree Rd
Pensacola 32514 **6:00 PM**

Note: Printed tickets have wrong date – Dec 8 – Party is Dec 14!

Last chance to get tickets: Meeting on Dec. 7. \$30
Lots of Hors'deuvres served all evening and cash bar.

Raffle Prizes:

- A brand new Orvis 10 wt rod and Orvis Hydros reel**
- Many rods and reels** from the estate donations including
 - Orvis Fly Rod, TLS Power Matrix 8wt, 9', 4 piece rod
 - Sage Fly Spey Rod, Model RPLX, 8wt, 12', 3 piece
 - Thomas and Thomas Fly Rod, 8wt, 9', 4 piece
 - Hardy Perfect Fly Reel, 7/8wt, with two spare spools
 - Tibor Billy Pate Bonefish reel, 7/9wt
 - 2 boxes of Salt Water flies by Gohrbrant
- A new 9 wt fly line** from Capt. Baz.
- A fishing trip** with Capt. Richard Montgomery
- A fishing trip** with Capt. Dan Storey

Raffle Tickets: \$5 or 6 / \$25 sold only at party.

Separate raffles for each item

Separate raffle for each rod and reel

Buy your tickets when you arrive at the party.

Put tickets in the bag that goes with the prize you want to win

Club Meeting Tuesday, Dec. 7 7:00
At the Clubhouse, In Person!

Last chance to get tickets for Christmas Party. Jerry Giles will present:
"Bream Fishing: A Dangerous but Rewarding Sport"

As per usual:
There will be NO Fly Tying or Clinic in December

November Oktoberfest Clinic



Grillmeister Jerry Giles

Fishing with Capt. Baz

It's November and time for the Running of the Bulls, but the big fish didn't get the memo. At least not yet. That said, Matt Wegener did have one of those incredible days late in the afternoon on November 3 between the points. Rumor has it that he and his dad landed 46! I was in the Bahamas. Got back late that night and had an afternoon trip the next day. We started at 1, searched all around the bay, and found nothing. Late in the trip we ran into a guide buddy of mine who told us the fish had been up between 10 and noon. How nice. I had the same clients back a couple days later. There was nothing happening with the big fish, so we spent the afternoon in Gilmore Bayou catching small trout. That night I got a tip from another guide that while we were in Gilmore Bayou a nice school of bulls surfaced near the Port of Pensacola. Missed them again. 'Tis the season...



Fast forward a week to the Project Healing Waters trip. Once again the fish fed the day before at the port. It was a breezy east wind day, and we banged our way over there. I had Russ and Larry Sisney on the boat, and there were no other boats in sight. The other PHW guides had gone elsewhere, and we just drifted around watching all the menhaden flipping. Suddenly there they were! A big school of fish came to the surface about a tenth of a mile away. I fired it up and started moving that way going slowly to not spook the fish. Larry was on the bow with his flyline coiled and ready. Out of nowhere a guide boat appeared running at top speed straight for the school. He ran right into the middle of the fish and all four spin anglers heaved their big lead jigs out there and hooked up. The school went down. I called in the other PHW boats, but by the time they got there more spin-fishing boats arrived and the game was over. Every time the fish tried to come up they were pummeled by lead jigs. That's about it for me. I'll continue to look for the big schools of redfish in the Gulf when conditions are right, and I'll check out other remote areas in the bay and sound. But as far as being in the middle of the annual Pensacola Bay redfish melee...I'm done.



Instead I'll be poling the edge of the Gulf or somewhere on the inside looking for the shallow-water redfish that I love. It's nice that few others pay attention to these fish especially in the late-fall and winter months. Bo Herrera and I did just that on November 9. We had a light NE wind and plenty of sun. After circumnavigating the bay looking for bulls we headed for the Gulf and

found calm, relatively clean water east of the pass. No other boats. Bright sunshine. In a word...*paradise!* We ran to the Observation Tower, jumped the bar to get in close to shore, and started poling. We were set up for pompano but instead found school after school of cownose rays. After poling that whole beach we found the redfish in the "palm tree" area. It was a nice school of a hundred fish cruising along outside the inner bar, and they had no idea we were there. I switched Bo to the grey/white EP baitfish, and he landed a nice fish on his first cast. The current swept us away from the school, so we never spooked the fish. For the next couple hours we cautiously worked the school and Bo ended up landing four redfish and a lovely fall pompano. It's amazing how long a school of redfish will play with you if you take care to not scare them.





At the end of the day we stopped on the way back to try Matt Wegener's "Fathead Mullet" on a sandy stretch of shallow water close to home. We found a nice redfish, and Bo dropped the fly right on target and let it sink. As he started the long "fleeing baitfish" strips the redfish came over to check it out. Bo kept stripping and the fish followed a couple inches behind the fly. Bo was using a 12' leader and ran out of flyline with the fish directly in front of the boat over a grass bed in a foot and a half of water. I called out "let it drop", and Bo let the fly drop into the grass. The fish went berserk and dove down on

the fly jerking its head back and forth trying to dig it out of the grass. The redfish got the fly and Bo landed it...a 30" beauty. It's the darndest thing I've ever seen one do, and I'll be looking forward to trying the technique again sometime.

I had our own Steve Hofmann on the boat the next day. A strong SE wind blew out the Gulf leaving the north side of the island as our only choice. We poled flats from the EPA to the Ranger Station and found a few fish everywhere we stopped. After various fly changes we settled on a commercially available mullet pattern that's similar to Matt's creation. The fish liked it! Steve broke the ice with this first fish that snatched the fly away from a couple larger ones.



Later on we found an area with a few grass beds on the edges of deeper sandy pools. From a distance I saw a small school of bigger fish settled on the bottom in one of these pools in 3-4' of water. We eased into casting range with a grass bed hiding us from the fish. The 50' cast would need to reach out across the shallow grass bed with the flyline dropping on the grass and the leader and fly extending out into the deeper pool. Steve made the shot of his life, didn't line the fish, and the fly landed softly in the center of the pool. They all

charged it at once, and Steve hooked into the biggest redfish of his life. After a couple runs deep into the backing he brought it to the boat. Very impressive!

For sure this is what I'll be doing from now on during bull redfish season; however, if you're out there and find a thousand of them on the surface don't forget to call... **Capt Baz**

Looking Ahead -

- January 4 Club meeting at 7:00 pm in clubhouse,
- January 13 Fly Tying at 6:30 pm in clubhouse,
- January 15 Clinic with lunch 9:00 am til noon at the clubhouse

Fly Fishing Class scheduled to begin March 14 at 6:00 pm.
The Auction will be on a Saturday in May.

Fishing Adventures with Wallace West



Every year a group of us make a trip to drink bourbon, eat good food, and hopefully catch some fish. Spent a couple days around the Big Bend, which was a new area for us. Weather made for some tough fishing but we managed to catch a couple.

Friday: 20+ mph winds and rain all day. No one in the house launched a kayak or boat but one guy managed a keeper red in the ditch behind the house. Also showed us how big the tide swings are in the area. Tide was coming in most of the day but if it had been in the reverse I could see someone having a muddy day.

Saturday: weatherman was calling for more rain and was wrong as frequently happens. Woke up to blue skies but the 20mph winds hadn't gone anywhere. Decided to hit a bay system hoping for some protection. Caught my best flounder on the fly blind casting an entrance to a pond and had the hook pull



on a decent red. Water wasn't super clear and ended up blowing out way more reds than I actually had decent shots at but was nice to know there were fish in the area.

Sunday: decided to explore and fish a different area. Showed up and the channel leading from the boat ramp was about dry and the wind hadn't gone anywhere. Got out anyways, saw maybe 5 fish on the outside but didn't have any reasonable shots. Weird coming from Pensacola to be fishing grass beds in the Gulf of Mexico instead of a bay system. Continued working down the shoreline until we came to a creek with a deep enough channel for us to get into. Immediately started seeing fish. One of the guys caught one on spinning gear and I missed shots at a couple. Eventually sight fished one in some limestone rocks and got broke off. Rerigged and landed one from the same area. Water had come up enough to get in the creeks. Saw one fish actively feeding that I spooked and had a follow from a nice speck I saw holding in current. Ended up being able to take the creek system all the way back to the road we put in on which made for a much more pleasant paddle than having to go around the point.



Monday: woke up to no wind on the day everyone had to drive home. Decided to fish early. Got to the spot from Saturday and we were too early. Still too much water to see anything and no signs of feeding so we decided to make a move. Got to a cove to the sights and sounds of 30+ redfish destroying little shrimp all over the cove. Ended up being able to sightfish one but for actively feeding they were quite spooky. Big difference from Louisiana in that regard. All in all had a great time and would definitely fish the area again. All my fish came on crack style patterns and the gear guys did good on curly tailed grubs.

Wallace

NWFF Meeting Nov. 2, 2021 Minutes

1805 Acting President Mick Milo opened the meeting

Previous Minutes: were approved.

Treasurer's Report: We have five new members and a healthy balance in checking. Pay Pal is up and operating. Two Christmas Party tickets were sold on PayPal. Treasurer's report was approved.

Old Business: Jim confirmed the party is on at Scenic Hills CC with 42 commitments as of October 31. We expect that number to increase. December 7 we will pay SHCC the balance with a final head count. The raffle has many great prizes (see the October Newsletter) as previously reported along with two guided trips with Dan Story and Richard Montgomery. Thanks guides for your generous donations.

Elections are November 20. A full slate is on the table and there is still time to put in new nominations. November 20 is our annual October Fest (outdoors) at the clubhouse (17th and Miraflores) with a casting clinic and German food provided by Cyndi Myers and Jerry Giles.

New Business: The plan is to resume indoor clubhouse meetings in January including PHW provided the virus numbers continue to decline in our area. Keep your fingers crossed. We have missed our indoor in person meetings. A reminder the Atlanta Fly Fishing Show resumes February 4-5th. Pay Pal is up and running (see the web site) for three options to pay. We are now in the 21st Century. Thanks, Cyndi.

Presentation: Bob Korose "Float Fishing in Alaska on the Chosen River"

Bob has fly fished all over the world and over the years has treated the club with many fine presentations. One of his greatest adventures was a ninety mile float and camping trip down the Chosen River for silver salmon in late August of 2009 near the Bering Sea. He and a buddy flew non-stop from Atlanta to Anchorage and connected on a float plane to Bethel. Silvers were their prime target but they also caught rainbows, grayling and Arctic char. King salmon run earlier. The float trip was peaceful with no major rapids on the National Refuge Portion of the with river (60 miles) with no other fishermen. The men camped on gravel bars in tents and had a guide who took care of all the food. The pink bunny and purple egg sucking leeches were the top flies. A pink polliwog, like a big gurgler worked early in the day. They fished with 10-15 pound leaders and a split shot 12-15 inches above the fly on 5 weight fly rods. They saw about twenty five bears the first five days and none after that. They had a brief stand-off with a big grizzly and only a twelve gauge shot gun between them but the bear eventually backed down after a scary showdown. The lower one third of the river was public waters and outside the refuge. On that portion they encountered other boats and camps. The trip started at the outlet of Kafati Lake. They booked the trip with Dave Duncan at Quezel expeditions and were quite pleased. They took the same trip the prior year. Thanks Bob for another informative presentation.

1830: The meeting adjourned.