

Flies & Lies

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLYFISHERS
OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA
MARCH 2013

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings at Miraflores Park
17th Avenue between
Belmont and LaRua

**BUSINESS MEETING
1ST TUESDAY, 7 PM**

**BULL SESSION
2ND THURSDAY, 6:30
PM**

**CASTING & TYING
CLINIC
3RD SATURDAY, 9 AM**

President's Message... Terry McCormick

March is here and that means it time to start schooling and I'm not talking talking about fish. I'm talking about our annual fly fishing school. Russ Shields is heading it up again and will need a lot of help with the casting and fly tying. We need a lot of assistant instructors to help out, so if you can lend a hand on Monday nights from 6 - 8 pm, contact Russ.

Also dues are due. If you haven't paid them for 2013 please do so. We want everyone to stay current so we don't have to be chasing you around.

Now will it every stop raining? It sure has missed up my fishing but like always it will so I can get out there or learn to cast from an ark.

Hope you have tight lines and remember the tug is the drug,

Terry

There will be a Board of Directors Meeting on April 2nd at 6 pm before the business meeting at 7 pm.

Business Meeting, Fly Fishers Of Northwest Florida, February 5, 2013, President Terry McCormick, presiding

Board of Directors meeting: 6:00 PM

The meeting was opened by President Terry McCormick. Treasurer Jay Brykczynski (not in attendance) submitted a treasurers report a proposed budget for 2013. The budget was discussed and will be voted on at the March meeting Roy Turner gave an update on the Web page and will be updating it with the new officers and committee chairs. Russ Shields gave a report on the upcoming fly fishing school set for March 4. The meeting was adjourned.

Business Meeting: 7:00 PM

The meeting was opened by President Terry McCormick. The welcoming of guest and new members was made and the fishing reports. There was an update of the membership and dues that had been collected. Paul Wago reported that about 48 members had not yet paid dues but expected to receive more at the Saturday clinic. Karen Brand gave a presentation on the South East FFF conclave to be held in Sylvia N. C. on May 17-18. Russ Shields gave a presentation on the upcoming fly fishing school. The meeting was adjourned.

Fishing Report... Captain Baz Yelverton

As we move into March it's time to get your fly boxes and tackle ready for some early spring action. The pompano are already here in large numbers, and I'm getting Spanish mackerel reports regularly from the beach pier. We are finding more big redfish and black drum along the beach both east and west of Pensacola Pass, and this trend will continue as the water warms. These are quality fish as you can see in photos from February 15 and 17. Sorry to say all the big fish landed in February were on spinning gear.

On Feb 14 my fly angler from California connected with a 25 pound+ redfish but basically lost his mind in the few seconds after the hookset. This guy spends his time trout fishing the streams of Northern California and has steelhead fished the coastal rivers with an 8wt. We found good numbers of redfish in shallow water, and I had him rigged with a 10wt, intermediate line, and a green/white go-meaux. Problem was the outfit was bigger than he could handle...couldn't get the fly to the fish, so we dropped back to an 8wt, intermediate line, and a #2 green/white EP clouser. I had the boat anchored along a drop-off 40-50' away, and as a group of fish moved into range Tom dropped the fly well in front of them and let it sink. Everything was going perfectly as the fish continued coming straight at the fly, and when they got close Tom made a nice, smooth strip and got an immediate take. He strip-set the hook and the 8wt bowed up beautifully as the big redfish surged. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw that Tom was holding tight to the fly line with his left hand. He wasn't going to give that fish an inch! I screamed "clear your line", but by then it was all over...25# surging redfish vs a piece of 15# tippet. Tom was sick and said his mind just went blank when the big fish ate the fly. It was a reminder to me to walk all fly-casters through the complete routine on how to hook, fight, and land a big fish. If I had done a better job of that, Tom might've landed that fish, and I would have had a darn photo to go with the story...

March is when the big schools of redfish and black drum start schooling around the Caucas Shoal. The big numbers of fish are in the deep waters of Pensacola Pass at the moment, but as the water warms they will move into shallower water and for some reason they like the shoal. Best way to find them is to catch a day with calm, clear conditions and simply drift around a quarter-mile offshore just west of the pass. The schools of fish will look like big (50-100' diameter), brownish-colored shadows. Quietly motor close enough to kill the engine and drift into range. Stealth is important if you're going to catch many of these fish.

As you are getting your tackle ready for spring remember the water is cold, and you will need a flyline with a braided core like S-A's "Saltwater Taper". All the companies have good coldwater lines. Stay away from the mono-core "tropical" lines until later in May. In cool conditions these lines have too much memory and act like a "slinky" on the deck.

If you strike out on the big redfish there are always some trout in the canals and bayous. I've been having steady success along the south side of the channel going into Bayou Grande. Here is Melanie Rojko on February 2 with cute little trout caught along that stretch.

On a final note the water is trashed at the moment from all the rain last week. It's "chocolate milk" throughout the bay, east to Deer Point, and into the Gulf. Yesterday we were sight-fishing some shallow water close to the pass and saw three sturgeon in the 4' range sitting on the bottom! I bumped them with the push pole to make them move. Talk about weird. We will have a good flow of tides all week, and in a few days things ought to



Fishing Report... The Big Fish are Back!... by Bob Willice

In the early 1960's my temporary home became the Strategic Air Command base at Blytheville Arkansas. My secondary home became the White and Norfolk River area in the Ozark Mountains of Northwestern Arkansas and many a weekend I have spent fishing those waters. In those Rivers for some unclear reason fish grow at very accelerated rate and rainbows in excess of 10 lbs. and brown trout in excess of 20 lbs. were not all that uncommon. The White at one time held the North American Brown Trout fishing record at 31 lbs. 8 oz.). In 1977 guide Leon Waggoner landed 33 lb. 8oz giant brown just ounces shy of the world record. When trout were first introduced around 1950 into the White below Bull Shoals Dam the river was known as smallmouth fishery. The locals at that time did not realize what a resource the trout were to become. Many were upset because they thought the trout were eating all the small mouth out of the rivers. A guide at that time charged \$35 per day including the bait motor and boat. If I saw 3 guide boats during a day of fishing it was a busy day on the river. Most of these big fish were caught on bait and there was no such thing as a trophy catch and release area and very little interest in fly fishing. A "fill the cooler mentality" from non-locals became so great the hatchery on the Norfolk River had a difficult time stocking the river to keep up with demand. Over time the rainbows got smaller and the big browns almost disappeared. Around 1990 I made my last trip there. Today the area is much changed. The natural beauty of the river remains even though cabins have replaced many of the open areas on the river banks and there are more four lanes to get you there. The rivers are better managed. Three miles worth of trophy waters with catch and release have been established; there are closed seasons established to allow the browns to spawn without human pressure; and conservation has become an important word. Only A few browns are stocked now. Most of the fish stocked are rainbows.

I had been hearing rumors from lodge owner Dale Fulton and guide Ron Yarborough that the big browns were back and were tremendous fighters. A flood in 2008 and again in 2011 combined with the sagging economy had reduced fishing pressure considerably. The creel count for 2012 was down 50% from 2011. It was a good opportunity to chase the big browns. The fish migrate upriver in November during spawning season due to the colder water, forage and spawning habitat and they would be concentrated in the upper part of the river. The best time would be February right after the spawn and the closed season on browns reopened. It would be during the nastiest coldest part of winter. The lake above the dam would be cold and the gizzard shad would be forced deep into the water column and sucked through the dam into the river. Bull Shoals Dam is a hydroelectric plant; the colder it is the more water runs through it to generate electricity so the water in the river would be high. The browns would be there to gorge themselves on shad and shad streamer patterns would be the ticket. There is an old saying on the White (nothing changes on the river except the water level). When I got there much to my chagrin I found that the area was in its second year of drought, Bull Shoals Lake was extremely low, and very little water was running through the dam. Night time temperatures would be 28 to 30 degrees with daytime temperatures mid 40's to mid-50's. There would be no shad kill this trip. The good news was the fish would be concentrated in the upper part of the river, the water would be clear enough to sight fish and the browns would be hungry. I was going to fish for 3 days exclusively for one of those trophy browns.

Fishing Report... The Big Fish are Back... Continued

I caught a lot of browns over the next 3 days. The browns were easy to spot moving around in the gin clearwater and to me some of them looked like submarines. Ron felt sure some of these fish were over 30 inches. The first 2 days I fished from Ron's Cadillac of a jet boat (21 ft johnboat with 30 hp Yamaha and plush seats). It was a vast improvement from the old wooden jon boats with 9hp mercury engines used in the old days. Two of eight generators ran part time. Although the river can be waded with up to two generators running fishing from a boat is safer and



gives you a much better chance to land one. It enables you to shorten the distance between you and the fish; it gives you much better access to the river and you don't have to worry so much about getting caught by sudden high water while wading. I fished yellow articulated streamers and wool head sculpins on a sinking line to reach the deep holes and a strike indicator rig with 12 ft. leader and 5 x tippets. They would not hit anything bigger than 5 x. On this rig I fished size 20 red and black zebra midges or 5mm egg patterns. I fished it on a 10 ft. 7wt rod and it required long casts and constant mending. On my first day I lost a monster brown at boat side when the boat drifted over a stump on the river bottom. The fish reached it and broke off. On my second day the trophy browns were really spooky and I could not get one to hit. They don't get to trophy size if they are easy to catch. On my third and last day the temps were in the high 50's and cloudy overcast skies made it impossible to sight fish for the big fish. The dam turned all generators off and the water became too shallow to use even the jet boat. We went wade fishing off some of the pea gravel bars a little further down river from the dam. I caught a lot of fish, there by blind casting. Most were rainbows of good size with an occasional brown tossed in. I didn't expect a monster brown to hit in this spot when suddenly he did. He shot straight across the river to the far side turned right and went straight downriver leaving a big bow in my fly line. There was no way to stop this fish on 5 x and he almost dumped my spool when he crossed a shallow gravel bar down river and cut the leader. It was over in less than a minute and I was lucky to get my fly line back. I came away wondering if it is possible to stop a fish like this on 5x from the bank. I am just going to have to try it again.



Food Committee Chef

Thanks to some volunteer cooks most of 2013 monthly Saturday lunches are filled till we get into Fall. October and November are still open. The volunteers, Jeff Deuscle, Kent Reagan, Bob Willice and Don Smith have hinted at meals far better than the marabou feathers that would have been on the menu if a month had been left open. This month's menu is going to be beer soaked grilled chili hotdogs, with cheese, onions, chips and pickles.

Chef extraordinaire Joe

2013 membership dues are now pass due. Jay Brykczynski is accepting renewals at this time. See Jay B. at any of the meetings or send to: Jay Brykczynski, FFNWF Membership, 3917 North 10th Ave., Pensacola, FL 32503

Make checks out to "FFNWF" \$30.00 for full membership, \$10.00 Associate

The Tip Jar....

COOKIE SHEET OR CAST IRON PAN

During one of our tying sessions Russ Shield was tying a crease fly. He suggested that if we wanted an accurate template to tie future flies we should make a template. He made his template from one of his wife's old cookie sheets. When I got home I got an old cookie sheet from the drawer and when my wife asked what I was doing she informed me that a cast iron pan would leave a good imprint on my head and I could use that for my fly making.

On trip to JoAnne I found a package of sheet metal, 3 x 4, with eight sheets. This works great for templates. On a trip to Dollar Tree I found that they carry plastic cutting mats. Two to a package and each sheet is 9 x 14. The cost was \$1.00. Plastic place mats also work well. Don't use the ones your wife is still using.

THE TIP: Cast iron templates are two heavy and hard to cut. Use something easier to cut and carry.

February Liars and Tiers Session



Loop Fly...by Matt Wegener



As many of you know, I have spent the last few years searching for a method to tie EP-style baitfish imitations that is both easy and effective at creating a perfect fly every time. The standard method for creating an EP baitfish is tedious work that often produces a fly that is horribly over dressed and lifeless in the water, or so under dressed that even the hungriest predator couldn't imagine eating it. I introduced the EP brushes last January as a possible solution for these problems, but the brushes are expensive and you can't create the 2-tone color pattern typical of the EP baitfish.

Folks, we may have found the answer. Within several days of each other, club member Roy Turner and a co-worker of mine both introduced me to this method. Talk about two guys on the cutting edge of fly tying! They provided me with a link to the January online-edition of *Fly Fishing in Saltwaters* magazine. In this article, Capt. Scott Sommerlatte introduced a new method created by Capt. Tom Horbey for using EP-fibers to create a clouser-style baitfish/crab imitation. He said, "It is simply the most efficient way to tie with synthetics such as EP Fibers."

Loop Fly...by Matt Wegener

I immediately realized the possible applications for using this method to create the 2-tone color patterns that make the EP Baitfish so productive. Simply repeat the method created by Capt. Horbey on the side of the hook shank and *viola*...you have an EP Baitfish! Please join me as we use Congo Hair, an inexpensive option to EP Fibers available only at the Fly Tyers Dungeon, to create some awesome baitfish imitations.

Tying Materials

Hook:	Mustad 34007, 1/0; or any style of 1X long saltwater hook
Thread:	White flat waxed nylon
Tail:	<i>Minnow Back Steel</i> Congo hair; 2 bunches consisting of 30 fibers.
Body:	<i>Baitfish Belly</i> Congo Hair; 4 bunches consisting of 60 fibers.
Flash:	Krystal Flash or Flashabou
Gills:	Red Water Silk; 1 bunch consisting of 30 fibers



Start by wrapping a thread base until it is directly above the hook point. Then tie in 4-5 strands of flash material, about 3 times the length of the hook shank, extending towards the rear of the fly. To create the tail, cut a full hank (about 6") of Congo Hair consisting of around 30 fibers. Tie it on to the hook shank so the un-cut fibers extend 2 ½ times the length of the hook shank. Then form a loop with the remaining fibers about a ¼ inch shorter.



Invert the fly in the vise and repeat the same process with the contrasting color.

To create the body, cut a full hank of Congo Hair consisting of around 60 fibers. Tie it the same way as in step 1 and 2: extending the un-cut fibers towards the rear of the fly, but only 2 times the length of the hook shank. Form a loop ¼ inch shorter than the length you just tied in. Repeat this process on the bottom of the fly with the contrasting color.



Loop Fly...by Matt Wegener



Form another loop $\frac{1}{4}$ inch shorter than the previous loop on the top and bottom of the fly.

To form the gills, tie in the Water Silk so that the un-cut end extends towards the rear of the fly the same length as the previous loop. Then form a loop $\frac{1}{4}$ inch shorter.



To finish the body and head, cut a full hank of Congo Hair consisting of around 60 fibers. Tie it in the same way as in previous steps, about the length of the hook shank. Make 1 loop, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch shorter than the previous. Leave the remaining material extending beyond the eye of the hook; this will form the sides of the baitfish. Repeat the process on the bottom of the fly, but trim the excess material.

Spread out the remaining material evenly so that the same number of fibers will be used on each side of the fly. Add 3 fibers of flash on each side of the fly, then run the remaining Congo Hair down each side to complete the body of the fly.



Loop Fly...by Matt Wegener



Add eyes and whip finish before cutting the thread. Then carefully trim each loop with scissors.

Brush out the material with a comb before the final trim.




This is what the fly looks like after being brushed.



Trim the top of the fly into the shape of a baitfish with a large pair of scissors



Trim the bottom to finish the fly.

FLY FISHERS

OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA

**PO BOX 1041
 PENSACOLA, FL 32591**



MARCH 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 Fly Fishing School	5 Business Meeting 7 PM	6	7	8	9
10	11 Fly Fishing School	12	13	14 Bull Session-Tying & Tall Tales 6:30 PM	14	16 Clinic - Casting, tying, gourmet lunch 9 AM
17	18 Fly Fishing School	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25 Fly Fishing School	26	27	28	29	30