



Flies and Lies

Newsletter of the Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida

October, 2017

FFNWF

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

at Miraflores Park
17th Avenue between
Belmont and LaRua

Business Meeting

1ST Tuesday, 7 PM

Bull Session - Tying

2ND Thursday, 6:30 PM

Clinic -Casting, Tying,

Lunch

3RD Saturday, 9 AM

Save the Date! Christmas Party

Tuesday, December 12

Holiday Inn on N. Davis

\$25. Raffle tickets \$5 6 for \$25

See the minutes for details



Club Meeting – Tuesday, October 3 - 7:00

The program: *Fly Fish Pensacola – Seasonal Trends that Catch Fish* by Matt Wegener. There WILL be a Board Meeting at 6:00

Fly Tying Bull Session – Thursday, October 12 - 6:30

Matt will present the *Copper John* (see page 3). Save your pennies.

Clinic – Saturday, October 21 – 9:00 AM



Brats and Brew. Chief of Lederhosen and chef of sausage Jerry Giles will command the grill. Casting and all that other stuff, too, but come for the food.

Fly Fishing Fair at Ocean Springs:



Our club was represented on the leadership level by Jonas Magnusson (casting), Gary Pheabus (tying), Capt. Chip and Don Smith (presenters).

More in Oleta's article next page.

From the Pres:

The Red Fish are coming, the Red Fish are coming, let's get ready to rumble. As you know the Gulf Coast Fly Fair was recently held in Ocean Springs, Mississippi and there were a few flies that were the buzz. We had several members from our club participating in the event. From our club we had:

Jonas Magnuson, CCI teaching the switch rod.

Capt. Chip Smith, Fly tying (Tarpon fly) - presentation, Fishing on the Hooch.

Unk Smith, - Fly tying (Shrimp pattern) - presentation, Fly fishing Espirito Santos Bay.

Gary Pheabus, Fly tying (Sea bunny).

George Norton and I also attended the event.

Friday, there were a few fly tyers tying as well as some people casting on the front lawn. On Saturday there were more fly tyers, classes, presentations, and casting instructions provided.

There was a buzz about Gary Pheabus's Sea Bunny and his dubbing loop technique. On Saturday, an FFI Master Casting Instructor named Mr. Keith Richards (really his name), left the event with some of Gary's Sea Bunny's. On Tuesday, Gary received two pictures from Mr. Richards showcasing the effectiveness of Gary's flies. The Sea Bunny was a success! Thanks to all for their participation. **Oleta**



PS: While fishing at the Hurst the bream were biting. Around 4:30pm this fella showed up. Guess he wanted fish. He had 14 rattlers and not nice.



Editor's note:

Yes, indeed, tastes like chicken

Bob Korose I visited Bob at the nursing home/rehab center this afternoon and I am delighted to report that he is making some progress and displayed a much improved attitude and determination today. He is able to use his arms to move his wheel chair and today for the first time, is able to move his legs and feet a small amount. That is a major improvement! His muscles are beginning to respond to his therapy. Although a bit frustrated as you might expect, he is not in any pain and anxious to keep his rehab on track or going faster! I am sure he would enjoy visits by any of us and I think they will encourage him as well. He is in room A346 at the Specialty Health and Rehabilitation Center located at 6984 Pine Forrest Rd, (next door to the Veranda Nursing home which has a much easier sign to see). It is just north of Longleaf Dr/Blue Angel Parkway. Drop by for a short visit Cheers, **Russ**

Project Healing Waters- Oleta has been selected to go on the PHWFF *Atlantic Albacore Festival* trip at Atlantic Beach North Carolina on October 19-23. We wish her lots of tight lines; It should be a blast. We also have a Healing Waters trip with Capt.'s Baz and Eddie scheduled for October 12. Cheers, **Russ**

Fly of the Month – the **Copper John** by Matt Wegener

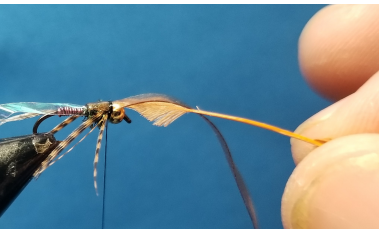
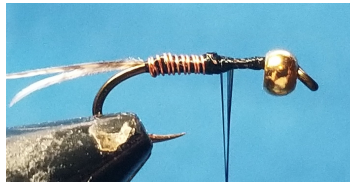
Originally created by John Barr, the Copper John is a flashy fly that sinks like a rock. It works great on trout throughout the country and will also fool bluegill in your backyard. This fly isn't difficult to tie, but you must be careful with the proportions, as there is not any spare room on a small hook shank to tie all of the materials on to. Also, the legs have notoriously been a problem, so I will show you a trick to get them perfect every time. Finally, a little dab of Clear Goo Thin on the wing case is optional, but adds another dimension of realism and makes the fly nearly bulletproof.



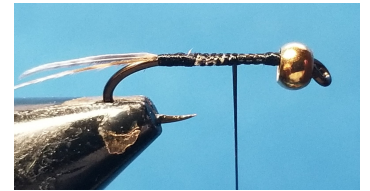
Hook:	#14-18 dry fly hook	Thread:	6/0 black
Tail:	2 turkey biots	Abdomen:	Fine copper wire
Thorax:	Peacock herl	Wing case (under):	Tan thin skin
Wing case (over):	Mylar sheet or flashback	Bead:	3/32" gold bead
Legs:	Partridge or speckled hen hackle feather		

Tying Instructions

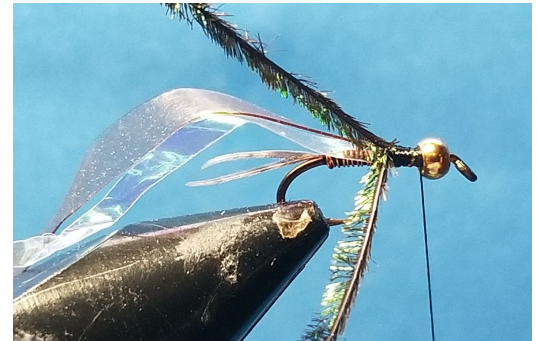
1. Slide bead onto hook and place in the vice. Tie in the black thread and form the tail by tying in the biots with the tips facing away from each other.



2. Tie in copper wire and make touching wraps forward about two-thirds down the hook shank.
3. Tie in the next three materials in this order: flashback, thin skin and peacock herl.
4. Wrap the herl around the hook shank to form the thorax.



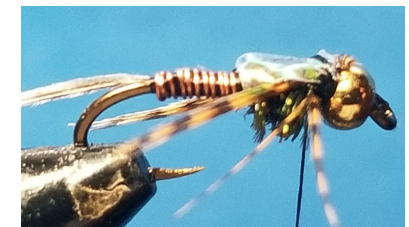
5. Select a feather and strip away the barbules at the base and then trim the tip of the feather and discard. This should leave equal numbers of barbules on both sides of the stem (see picture).
6. Tie in the trimmed feather just behind the behind with two loose wraps.



7. Pull the thin skin over the feather and tie in with two loose wraps. Pull the base of the feather to shorten the legs, so they don't extend beyond the hook point.



8. Finish with a whip finish, trim thread and cover thread wraps with head cement or apply a thin layer of Clear



Goo Think over the wing case and thread wraps.

Running from Irma...by Matt Wegener



When you visit the Florida Keys, it becomes obvious that powerful forces helped shape this sportsman's paradise. Unfortunately for the residents of this area, they just felt the power of these forces first-hand. I was in the lower keys three days before Hurricane Irma made landfall. According to meteorologists, the eye passed about 10 miles north of Sugar Loaf Key, where I was staying. We have all heard reports about the devastation left behind, but I wanted to share the experience of what it was like to be there immediately before the storm, evacuating out ahead of the storm, and some of the damage that Irma left behind.

If you are reading this for just a fish story, you may be disappointed. Normally this article would be all about trying to convince the glamour species of the Florida Keys (bonefish, permit & tarpon) to eat a fly. This annual 7-day pilgrimage with some of my biologist friends has produced several catches of a lifetime for me. That includes my first bonefish and several baby tarpon in the 20 to 40 pound range, all on the fly rod. Mangrove snapper in the 1 to 2 pound range normally keep my fly line pretty tight throughout the day and this was no different on this trip. They preferred a #6 crazy Charlie with fire-orange accents (Tarpon Bob Korose's favorite color!) slowly drifting with the current. But the constant threat of this hurricane made it difficult to concentrate on fishing, let alone relaxing on Island time and fully enjoying Keys Life.

You see, going to the Keys is all about getting into Keys Life. That means tuning out of everything in the real world and only worrying about where a short skiff ride may take you. Think of the soundtrack to real life as a song by the Rolling Stones with a random smattering of car horns sounding in the background. The soundtrack to Keys life is a Jimmy Buffet song – with no words. But it's hard to get into that zone when every wife, parent, boss, and friend from Yankee Land is calling to make sure we have already evacuated the Keys. We stayed strong at first and refused to cut our annual trip short by even one hour. Eventually, with enough phone calls urging us to leave, our tune changed from, "We aren't leaving" to "Ok, leaving on Friday". Then it was Thursday, and finally mandatory evacuations were ordered and we left Wednesday night.

The drive home to Pensacola was surprisingly uneventful. It took nearly 20 hours (5 hours longer than normal) because we decided to avoid all major interstates and the turnpike, and instead took the scenic route up Alligator Alley in the early morning hours. It was a long drive. We watched the sun go down and come back up, and yet we were still driving. The good news is that traffic on the back roads was even scarcer than gas stations with gas. We used an app on my smart phone called "Gas Buddy" that helped to find stations with gas. Many of them were already out, but we filled up every time we had the chance.

This may sound strange, but the best day of the trip was the day we left. The Keys aren't crowded this time of year. It's their offseason. But we still normally see 10-20 boats per day. Not this day. The rest of the island was busy securing their belongings and boarding up windows. Even with the evidence of a forthcoming storm surrounding us, I was snorkeling and fishing without even the distant sound of an outboard motoring along – all I could hear was that instrumental Jimmy Buffet song. The rocks we were diving that day were a frenzy of life. It was like everything knew an imminent threat was brewing, and the fish were busy making preparations. As drove away that night, the bridges were lined with cars that the locals had parked on the highest points of land to avoid flooding. Even with this ominous sign, I couldn't help but wonder if those rocks would be there next year – and would there be any bridges left for us to make it back to Sugar Loaf Key?

Matt

Fishing with Capt. Baz The most exciting thing about September was getting through the month with no significant tropical activity. Even though it was incredibly nerve-racking we escaped the month unscathed. The Gulf and inside waters are clear enough now for sight-fishing and getting better all the time, plus all the fish that are supposed to be here *are* here. I even got a report yesterday morning of a school of bull redfish on top by the Three Mile Bridge! A tropical storm or hurricane would've put us out of business for the rest of the year, so we should collectively count our lucky stars and do the only thing there is to do...go fishing!

The low-hanging fruit at the moment are the Spanish mackerel. The big fish are here in good numbers at all the usual spots, but you need to be there on fast-moving water. Incoming or outgoing doesn't matter as long as there is plenty of flow. For the big fish use wire tippet and the usual tan/white Clouser. We've been having a lot of fun with small poppers, too. On an east wind try the shore between the mouth of Gilmore Bayou and Town Point...close in...around 3' of water. There have been schools of Spanish there for the past few days. These aren't the giants, but they are perfect "keeper-sized" fish for those of you who like to take some home. The fish are feeding on something tiny, so I've dropped down to #6 gummy minnows. There have also been lots of schools of ladyfish around Town Point the last few days, and the huge ladyfish are in the Gulf between the Observation Tower and Pickens Point. There are plenty of 3-4 pounders in the mix, so use 40# mono tippet and hang on. If you start getting cut off attach some wire. Check out this ladyfish caught by octogenarian Frank Bainbridge on September 3.



There are redfish on most of the sand and grass flats, but the fishing is pretty technical. We've been seeing lots of fish and getting a lot of shots, but as is usual in September not many takes. I'd say one in ten redfish will eat a properly presented fly these days. Mike Petrucci connected with this fish on April 2 on a nice sand flat around Opal Beach. Then a couple weeks later Park City Outfitters owner and guide Brandon Bertagnole nailed this beauty in the same general area. Both fish took the EP gray/white baitfish. Brandon's an excellent caster...FFF Certified Instructor...but maybe twenty redfish paid no attention to his fly before this one sucked it down! Go figure. Andy Anderson from Scotland coaxed the next fish to eat a tan/white clouser minnow just down the beach from Pickens Point on September 5. There was a school of about a hundred redfish living in that neighborhood, but they've all disappeared since the heavy surf from Irma.



The most exciting fish of the month was this 28 pound jack crevalle landed by Michigan guide Andrew Behrend on Sept 2. We were staked out on a shallow flat a hundred feet from shore taking "pot shots" at passing redfish when hundreds of mullet started "showering" a couple hundred yards down the beach. It was a school of jacks for sure, and we could see them exploding like depth charges all around the mullet. The normal "fire drill" controlled panic broke out on the boat as Andrew cranked in and stowed the 8wt, pulled out the 10wt with the big popper, and worked out some line. While he was in the direction of the melee. As luck would have it the jacks were moving in our direction. It was a small pod of a

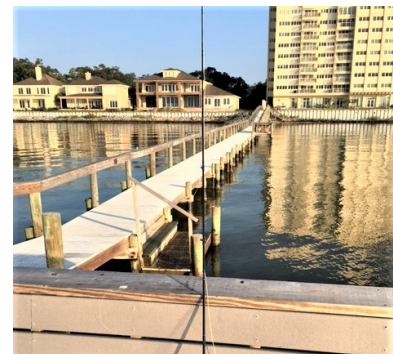


doing that I was pulling in the anchor, grabbing the push pole, jumping up on the platform, and poling us in the direction of the melee. As luck would have it the jacks were moving in our direction. It was a small pod of a dozen big fish that looked like black torpedoes pushing wakes in the shallow water. As the fish approached the boat they broke to the inside trying to get between us and the beach. But the water got too shallow, and they turned directly at us. It was all happening so fast there wasn't time to get "buck fever", and Andrew instinctively backhanded the popper in front of the fish and started stripping. The jacks were nervous from the presence of the boat and the shallow water and passed under the popper without noticing it. I thought Andrew was going to pick up and recast in "Hail Mary" fashion, but he kept stripping the fly closer and closer to the boat. A split second later I saw why as this huge jack crushed the fly 10 feet from the boat! The fish's head literally came up out of the water as it hammered the popper with Andrew looking straight down its throat! A half hour later he brought it to the net, we got the photo, resuscitated the fish, and watched it swim away. It just does not get any better...anywhere. **Capt. Baz**

Fishing Report – Close to Home (right outside my door)

On my condo dock and in the kayak I have caught a mixed bag of ladyfish, bluefish, a hardhead catfish, baby redfish, small jacks, a sail catfish and a few nice trout on a pink and white and chartreuse clouser and a pink shrimp fly. I have seen twenty or thirty trout under the condo lights milling around and other nights few or none. The trout under the lights are very skittish in the shallow water and don't hit after one of their brethren gets rudely dragged out. Strikes usually occur as the fly comes out of the darkness into the light. Choppy water at night is best for trout in my experience. The ladyfish also showed up one day just outside the EPA on top after there was nothing all the way to the Pass and back.

George Norton



Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida Minutes September 5, 2017 by George Norton

The meeting started at 1900 hours. Fifteen Members were present

The meeting was called to order by President, Oleta Webb

We reviewed and accepted last months' minutes

Old Business: The treasurer confirmed we have 63 paid club members year to date versus 70 members last year. Thirteen of our club members are also members of Fly Fishers International.

Treasurers Report was presented and a motion to accept was passed. Our club's finances are in good shape with a surplus going into the Christmas Party.

New Business/Committee Reports and discussions: Jay gave a report on two options for our Christmas Party. Option one is the Holiday Inn, the same venue as last year. The Holiday Inn did a very good job last year after the previous year's poor performance. There was some concern about the upcoming party at Holiday Inn since it is under construction.

The Holiday Inn management told us to not worry about the construction and that everything would be fine.

Based on these concerns, our alert treasurer went out and got a second bid for the party from the Hilton Garden Inn. The Hilton's proposal was for a very nice party but the cost was considerably higher than the Holiday Inn. The members present voted to stay with the Holiday Inn where we have a track record and the lower cost was an important factor.

The date of the Christmas party is set for December 12th. The tickets will be \$25. There will be door prizes and raffles. Last year 45 members and guests attended so bring your wives and girlfriends. Last year every member got a very nice fly box and wives and girlfriends all got something too. There are very nice raffle prizes that include rods, reels, and a trip with Baz. Raffle tickets will be \$5 or 6 for \$25.

Fishing reports: Nothing can top Terry's big Jack Crevelle of last month at the Massachusetts where he had to jump back and forth into Tom Finkle's boat to land the giant fish. The pelagic fish are moving into the Bay following the bait. The Bay is finally clearing.

Program: Oleta told us about her recent 28 day camping and fishing trip to the Wild West. Oleta fished and took fly fishing classes taught by women fly fishers and had a high old time. She and a friend drove over 7000 miles and fished Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Colorado. I asked if she had any regrets. She said "I wish I had more time." It was a great trip and we all learned something about when and where to go, what flies she used, and how to camp for 28 days straight which is amazing.