

# Flies & Lies

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLYFISHERS  
OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA  
SEPTEMBER 2011

THE FLYFISHERS OF  
NORTHWEST FLORIDA  
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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

## *Temple Fork Outfitters to the Rescue... Russ Shields*

We have known for quite some time that we needed to upgrade the rods and reels used for our annual class and the monthly clinics. Our old rods being heavy clunkers for the most part, are difficult for new folks to try to learn to cast with. The last course which ended in May really emphasized the problem since we had 20 active students.

TFO had been offering to sell five rods and reels for strictly educational purposes basically at their cost, through the FFF. After several attempts to purchase the ten rods and reels that we really needed through the FFF and TFO and having repeated denials we were "dead in the water". We already had five TFO rods and reels obtained through a Sierra Club/ TFO offer a couple of years ago, but we really needed ten more.

At the Southeastern Council of the FFF Festival in Helen, Ga. this past June, John Brand related our story to Ed Jaworski, the TFO representative for Florida. Ed suggested that we contact Rick Pope, the CEO of Temple Fork Outfitters, directly with our story and request. He commented that Rick was a real nice guy, who would probably work with us. After an email exchange and phone conversation with Rick he agreed to sell us ten rods and reels and a roll-up storage case for \$60 per rod and reel spooled with backing, line and even a tapered leader!

We now have ten, new, lovely 8 1/2ft 5 wt Signature Series rods and ten NXT-1 reels completely spooled and ready for casting instruction. Thanks to Temple Fork Outfitters we will be set for several years.

So remember Temple Fork when you are looking to buy a fine new rod or reel at a pretty reasonable price. These are really good products that come with a lifetime warranty.

## **Club Youth Project With Scouts a Great Success**

This summer marked the twentieth year our club has provided materials and support for the fly fishing program at Boy Scout Camp Euchee at DeFuniak Springs. A total of 63 Scouts participated in the teaching periods. The evening sessions on fly tying were well attended. The club furnished materials for tying the Woolly Bugger and the Clouser Minnow. Instructors were Vick Vickery, Ed Kneller, Gene Langston and Ted Spangenburg. We hope these sessions sparked an interest and will produce some new fly fishers.

## Business Meeting, Fly Fishers Of Northwest Florida, August 2, 2011, President Tom Birdwell, presiding

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Birdwell, at about 6:30 P.M.  
Gerald Giles, substitute secretary, had no minutes available from the July meeting.  
The treasurer's report was submitted by Larry Sisney, and approved by the members.

John Brand and Bill Locher presented a slide show of their recent trip out west. They rode BMW Motorcycles, which had more equipment on them than the average pack-mule. The scenery was spectacular, with the zenith of the journey being the "Top Of The World", store at about 10,000., feet in altitude. The snow there was high as a tippi, and wind storms almost blew their tents apart. Bears, bison, elk, and other snuffling critters kept them alert on the trail. The sage and flowers were spectacular. The rivers were "blown out", due to a 250%, overage in the snow fall and melt. They did show splendid shots of the "bows & cuts", they took from lakes. As a bonus, they stopped at Yellowstone Lodge and spent some time with our club member Travis Akins, who works there. Some people dream. Others get out there and do. Glad you are back safely guys.

Old business: Russ Shields reports that he has been in contact with Temple Fork, Inc., regarding purchase of rods for the club. They have agreed to furnish 10, 8 1/2' rods, w/reels, line, and backing, for \$60.00., each. This purchase had prior approval at that rate. Russ was asked to proceed.

Larry Sisney brought up the subject of web-site maintenance. Jerry Aldridge reported that Tom Birdwell's son, Thomas, of Birdwell Photography, will maintain the site.

New Business: John LeGrand reported that he is planning a charter boat trip for the club. Anyone interested in participating should contact him at (850)471-7056, or at legrand02@cox.net.

Kevin Gorby proposed that we again consider the prospect of direct participation in the "Healing Waters" program. He stated that there had been some changes which would make it more easy for us to do so. For detailed information, contact Kevin at (850)2184235, or e-mail: krgorby@att.net. President Birdwell said that the matter will be further addressed at the Sept., board meeting.

Thanks to Russ Shields for placing a new mirror in the men's room, at no cost to the club. Several humorous comments regarding reflection were heard.

Vick Vickery returned club materials used in the Boy Scout summer camp training.

Vick has been a perennial help to them and to furthering interest in fly fishing among young people. Much appreciated, Vick.

The meeting was adjourned.

Gerald (Jerry) Giles, Sub. Sec.

## *Casting & Tying at the Club.... Tom Regina*

September 8 Bull session 6:30 PM. Bring your tying materials and tools to the bull session and tie the fly of your choice while telling fish stories or just come and tell lies and drink an adult beverage or two. Teach someone a tying tip or two or pick up some tips.

September 17 Casting and tying clinic. Casting practice and instruction with John Brand starts promptly at 9:00 AM. Bring your long rod or use one of your club's fly rods. Fly tying instruction also starts at 9:00 AM. Russ Shields will demonstrate how to make surface poppers from wine bottle corks. If you have a Dremel Tool bring it to the tying session along with a small hand held wood rasp.

Free lunch will be provided at the Saturday casting and tying clinic. Beverages are available for \$1 at all club bull sessions, clinics, and meetings. And remember, guests are always welcome at all club functions. We will even feed your guests for free at the Saturday clinics.

## *Making Fly Rod Poppers... Russ Shields with photos by Larry Sisney*

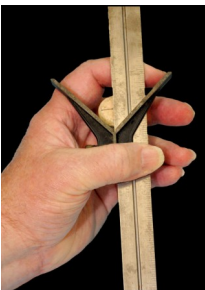
Poppers have long been a good imitation of bait fish, frogs and mice and are very productive in catching both fresh and salt water species of fish. In fresh water, the Golden Shiner is one of the most common bait fish species: In salt water Menhaden or Alewives are ubiquitous. All kinds of materials and shapes have been used for making poppers over the years. Everything from foam backer rod, balsa wood, cork and stacked closed-cell foam disks have been used and I have tried them all. The biggest advantage of making your own poppers is that you can make any size and shape you like from short and fat to long and skinny "pencil poppers". For the last two or three years I have been using new wine bottle corks as the basis of my fresh and salt water poppers of all sizes. The corks are cheap and readily available at wine making suppliers such as "The Shady Lady" on Nine-Mile Road in Pensacola. I have been using a wood lathe to spin the popper bodies and that works very well, but most people don't have access to a lathe. For general use, a new and simpler method is needed and I have been experimenting with several techniques for the past couple of months. It turns out that all one needs is a Dremel Tool and a long dry-wall or deck screw with the head cut off! Once the popper body is made, most any method of painting it will work: Dipping, brush painting and spraying all work well, spraying works the best for me. When completed, the poppers can be clear-coated with spray enamel or a thin coat of epoxy.

NOTE: IF YOU HAVE A DREMEL TOOL AND WANT TO MAKE A POPPER OR TWO, BRING IT. I WILL HAVE PLENTY OF CORKS AND HOOKS

So let's get started and make a Pencil Popper to imitate a Golden Shiner.



1. Here are the tools we need: A Dremel Tool, center finder rule, headless deck screw, small rasp, fine toothed hack saw blade, small fine toothed round and tapered burrs (Kutzall), a caliper (preferably dial), small cut-off wheel, some sand paper, paint and Sparkle paste.



2. Using a center-finder rule, locate the center point of the end of the cork. Take an ice pick and press it as straight as you can all the way into the cork. This makes a path for the screw. With the screw mounted in the Dremel Tool, thread the cork on the screw all the way to the tool chuck.

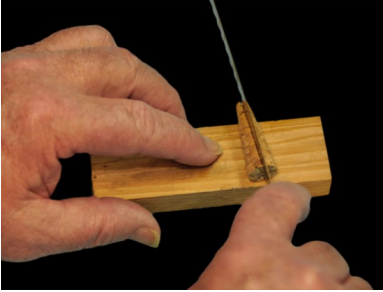


3. Brace the Dremel Tool on the edge of a waste basket and running the tool at about half speed lightly press the small rasp to the cork and slowly shape the cork body. This goes very quickly so be a careful not to take off too much cork. Sand the body smooth finishing with 180 and 220 grit paper. Check the front and rear diameters with the caliper. When you have the shape you want, remove the cork from the screw and prepare to make the hook slot.

4. With the popper face down on a flat surface, rotate the body to find the side closest to the vertical. This is the side where the hook slot will be made and it positions the face of the popper with the correct slant.



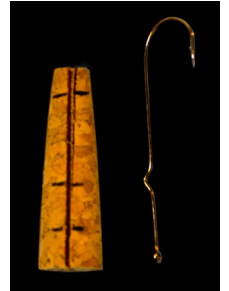
## Making Fly Rod Poppers... Russ Shields with photos by Larry Sisney



5. Mark the body and cut the hook slot with the fine tooth hack saw blade using a pull motion rather than pushing the blade: It is easier and more accurate.

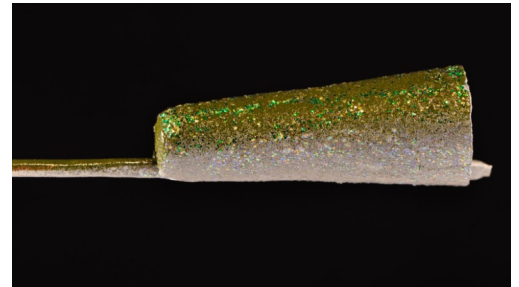
6. Mark the location of the "V" in the hook shank and using a small slitting tool or cut-off wheel cut a deep slot for the hook V making sure the blade is straight up and down. With the hook in the slot and the eye at the front of the popper body, check the length of the body and if necessary trim the small end of the body with a fine toothed saw, so that it extends to a point above the point of the hook.

7. If desired, concave the face of the popper using the Dremel Tool and a round burr.



8. Back-drill the hole in the small end of the popper for the hook dressing. Use a small drill or a small tapered burr.

9. At this point you are ready to coat the cork with sanding sealer and paint the popper body with the colors you like. We are simulating a Golden Shiner so we will use a silver under-coat and a dark green for the very top of the popper. Use a short (6") piece of #12 copper wire with one end flattened to fit the hook slot to support the popper body while you paint it.



10. After the sanding sealer dries, sand it with 220 grit paper. Spray paint the body with silver all over and dark green only on the top. After the paint dries, brush on the Sparkle, green/gold on the top, silver on the sides and bottom. When the sparkle dries, add eyes if you wish, and spray the body with two coats of clear coat enamel.



11. Dress the hook (#1 Pencil Popper hook) using appropriate colors of Unique Hair and Crystal Flash. Tie the material on the hook shank above and in front of the hook point so that it fits in the rear hole in the body.

12. Remove the copper wire without tearing the cork by using an Exacto knife to carefully cut along each side of the wire. Mix up a small amount of 5 minute epoxy and put some in the hook slot and a small amount in the rear hole, set the hook in place and make sure it is properly positioned. Fill in the hook slot with epoxy being careful not to over fill it: When the epoxy is set, file/sand the epoxy on the hook slot flush with the body.

## *Making Fly Rod Poppers.... Russ Shields with photos by Larry Sisney*

13. Touch up the hook slot area with silver paint and Sparkle and give it a shot of clear coat. Then go catch some fish!

Many thanks to Larry Sisney for the great job with the pictures for this article. They really tell the story!



## *Know the Members.... Ed Wingfield*

**John Le Grand** is a new member joining us back in May. John has lived a colorful life with the positions he achieved in being; the Art Director at Golden Books (the children's book publisher), a Staff Officer at the New York Museum of Natural History, being a Graphic Artist and the proprietor of his own advertising firm. John and Gretchen, his wife of 47 years, have traveled extensively and have made their way here by way of New York City to Cleveland to Destin (the tourists drove them out) and finally to Pensacola, here now for almost 9 years. They have only one daughter, Jeane, who is a very dedicated Registered Nurse.

John has been interested in fly fishing for about 50 years when a customer, True Temper, gave him a new fiberglass model fly rod as a token of thanks back in the 60's. Though he's had the fly rod all this time he's never had the opportunity to learn to fly fish although he's fished all his life. Now in his retirement, John enjoys to paint portraits, wildlife, active scenery (no bowls of fruit here) and carry on a good conversation whenever possible. He's also willing to pitch in whenever needed but unfortunately Gretchen has had surgery lately and taking care of her has cut into his fishing time. Thanks to the good Lord things will be back to normal in a week to ten days.

**Russ Shields** is one of our most active members since joining in 2001. He has served as Facilities Chairman, Vice-President, the Chief Cook and Bottle Washer for the past 5 years and now is the Fly Fishing Course Chairman for our club. Russ began fly fishing before he was 14 out west where he fished with an old fiberglass Heddon HGH rod (which he still has) but later on his fly fishing was curtailed by military service. Then after retiring he took the fly fishing course in March 2001 and has been hooked every since.

Russ has lived in Pensacola with his wife of 42 years, Irene since 1985. They have two children; a son Michael K. Shields who holds a PHD in Electrical Engineering and a daughter Karyn Patrica Carnes. Russ and Irene are also the proud grandparents of 3 grandchildren; 2 girls and a boy

Russ is a retired Navy Captain with 32 years service, 6 as an enlisted man in the Naval Reserve. Russ has a BS in Mechanical Engineering and a MS in Electrical Engineering. During his tenure in the Navy he had some enjoyable tours of duty in: Kami Seya, Japan; Monterey, California; Rota, Spain and more than once in Washington D.C. Here in Pensacola Russ had his own business he started in 1987 doing home repairs and remodeling. Always wanting to give back to the community Russ has been a member of the Optimist Club of Pensacola since 1987 and started the "Just Say No To Drugs" Program in 1988 which he ran for 7 years.

Today, Russ's interests besides fly fishing are shown in his enjoyment of wood working and turning, all kinds of cooking with emphasis on soups, chowders, stews and grilling meats. He also enjoys shooting rifles, pistols, shotguns and reloading ammunition for them.

## Fishing Report... Captain Baz Velverton



The key words for August have been "heat index"! For those who can stand the heat the fly-fishing has been very good. August is a month when you can't be too picky and have to go after what's out there. Sometimes you'll get lucky and find our more prestigious species like redfish and false albacore...even big trout..., but usually we're talking about Spanish mackerel, bluefish, ladyfish, etc. For the last couple weeks the best area for ladyfish and blues has been Johnson's Beach. We've been running out the pass and to the west until reaching the first condo on Old Gulf Beach Highway. The bluefish have been on the sandbar and in the cuts between the bar and the beach. These are nice fish in the 3-4# range, and we've been taking them on poppers and gummy minnows. This first shot is of Hobart

McWhorter with a typical bluefish.

The ladyfish are in the deeper water (6-8') all along Johnson's Beach. Find for the dolphins and the ladyfish won't be far away. Another excellent spot to ambush both species is my usual hangout a hundred feet or so out from the point on the west side of the pass. On strong outgoing water you can either anchor there or drift out with the current toward the Caucus Shoal. We've been mostly drifting because of all the jellyfish. Pulling in an anchor line coated with jellyfish slime is something to be avoided...

The best places for Spanish mackerel have been the Pensacola side of the 3 Mile Bridge, between the Turning Basin and the entrance to Bayou Grande, just out the Pass to the east, and on outgoing water anywhere between Pickens Pier and NAS. Look for the birds and bay anchovies.

For bluefish, ladyfish, and Spanish mackerel I like floating lines and 9' leaders consisting of a 6' straight shot of 40# mono and 3' of 60# mono. You'll have to retie the fly after a few fish, but the 60# bite tippet usually stands up well. I don't use wire except for sharks and king mackerel.



Speaking of king mackerel, there have been a decent number of 3-6# juvenile kings mixed in with a few big Spanish mackerel by the USS Massachusetts. There aren't a lot of fish, but it's certainly worth 20 minutes of blind-casting Clousers and larger gummy minnows. A few weeks ago I had some spin-fishing clients throwing Clark spoons on ultra-light tackle, and one of them miraculously landed a 22# king mackerel! On August 16 hoping for a repeat of that experience but this time *on fly*, Feather-craft's Bob Story tied on a big, flashy streamer with a wire leader and spent some time laying out long, beautiful casts to all the appropriate holding spots around the "Mass". We never got a big fish to eat the fly, but Bob did land the juvenile king in the photo. If you head out there and plan to keep a fish or two be

sure you know how to tell a king from a Spanish. Kings have to be 24" to the fork. Sliding a juvenile into the cooler can cost you \$450, so be sure that fish has a sooty-black dorsal fin!

I'm pleased to report that on August 18 Hobart McWhorter landed the first pompano on fly for 2011. We were running down Johnson's Beach just outside the bar toward the first condo when pompano started skipping in our wake. We ran on down the beach a hundred yards or so, stopped to tie on my favorite pompano fly, and eased back to where we'd seen the fish. I poled while Hobart blind-casted, and in a few minutes he was hooked up. What a relief to finally land a pompano on fly! The rest of the story is that Hobart loves eating pompano and wanted to keep it. After taking the photo I put the fish back in the net and carried it to the stern where I have my lawstick glued to the top of a hatch. I laid the fish still in the net on the ruler, but before I could get a measurement the pompano flopped overboard. Hobart and I had a good laugh about it, and all was right with the universe. It would've been very bad karma to kill the first pompano of the year... What were we thinking! BTW, check out the latest issue of *Fly Fishing in Saltwaters* for a nice article on Florida pompano fishing including the panhandle.



The most exciting and unusual experience since my last report was on July 30 when the blue water pushed within five miles of shore. Along with the beautiful water came the false albacore and mahi mahi. We found some floating debris between the Three Barges and the Tex Edwards and just drifted along with it while hundreds of spectacularly gorgeous little mahi circled the boat. Brandon Pope was with me that day, and he landed "chicken dolphin" on gummy minnows until we tired of it and tried unsuccessfully for the FA. In all my years in the Gulf I've never seen so many mahi mahi that close to shore. This photo of Brandon captures the intense beauty of these creatures.



As we move into September we'll start seeing redfish mixed in with ladyfish and Spanish mackerel around the bait balls close to the pass. Toward the end of the month the big schools of menhaden will start their move toward the Gulf. A couple "cool" fronts and the fall season will be on us. I can't wait! Capt Baz

## *SUV Rod Holder... George Bennett*

How about a rod holder that holds five rods for those of you who have an SUV. This is a simple, easy, and reasonable way to keep your rods out of harm's way while traveling.

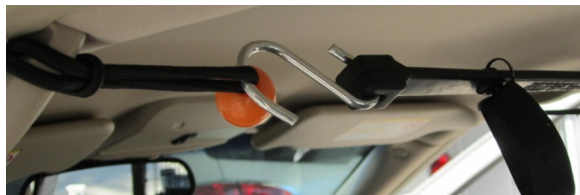
### **What you will need for your holder.**

1. 4 each bungee cords length to be determined by the distance from clothes hooks (local)
2. 2 each Versa straps adjustable 24 or 34 inches in length (northernsafety.com)
3. 10 each Plastic ties about 8 to 10 inches in length (local)
4. 10 each Velcro one way straps (local)
5. The cost is less than \$ 20.00 to build compared to \$175.00

### **Steps**

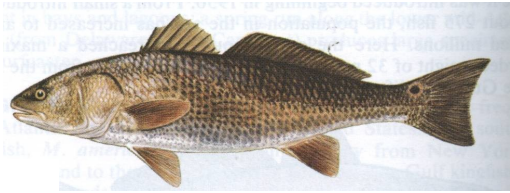
1. Measure the distance from clothes hook front and back. I used the 34 inch ones.
2. Hook the bungee to the straps and adjust to clothes for a snug fit. Now remove and get Velcro and plastic ties.
3. Punch a small hole in each piece Velcro and secure it to the hole in the versa strap with a plastic tie.
4. Reinstall the unit back on the clothes hooks and put your rods in and secure with Velcro.
5. Now hit the road and go fishing.

### **Pictures at various stages of assembly**



**FLY FISHERS**  
  
**OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA**

**PO BOX 1041  
 PENSACOLA, FL 32591**



# SEPTEMBER 2011

| Sun       | Mon                              | Tue       | Wed  | Thu       | Fri  | Sat       |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------|--|-----------|--|-----------|
|           |                                  |           |  | <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>                         | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b>   | <b>8</b>  | <b>9</b>   | <b>10</b> |
|           | <b>Business Meeting<br/>7 PM</b> |           |  |           |  |           |
| <b>11</b> | <b>12</b>                        | <b>13</b> | <b>14</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>16</b>  | <b>17</b> |
|           |                                  |           | <b>Bull Session-Tying &amp;<br/>Tall Tales 6:30 PM</b> |           | <b>Clinic - Casting, tying,<br/>gourmet lunch 9 AM</b> |           |
| <b>18</b> | <b>19</b>                        | <b>20</b> | <b>21</b>  | <b>22</b> | <b>23</b>  | <b>24</b> |
| <b>25</b> | <b>26</b>                        | <b>27</b> | <b>28</b>  | <b>29</b> | <b>30</b>  |           |