



# Flies and Lies

Newsletter of the Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida

September, 2023

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Business Meeting  
1ST Tuesday, 6:30 PM

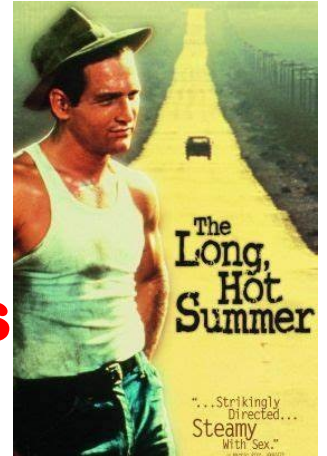
Bull Session - Tying  
2ND Thursday, 6:30 PM

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

**So, You thought this Long Hot  
Summer would Never End....**

**Well, We Have News for You!!**

**Christmas Party Tickets  
Are On Sale Soon!!**



**Club Meeting – Tuesday, September 5 6:30**

*(It will seem like a Monday)* The program will be "Fly Fishing the Great State of Colorado - 10 Famous Rivers From 2012 to 2018" by Steve and Ellen Hofmann.

**Fly Tying – Thursday, September 14 6:30**

We will be tying the Sea Streamer. Once again we will have a YouTube video to follow.



**Clinic – Saturday, September 16 9:00 AM**

*(Same week as fly tying)* For our lunch Russ Shields will be serving up Grilled marinated mullet filets, Dinner rolls, Potato chips and Potato salad and, best of all, Irene's Oriental Mandarin Orange Salad.

Plan ahead: The *Oktoberfest* will be in October this year!

**Club Fishing Trip – September 13- 15 Eastport**

The Sportsman's Lodge, Motel, and Marina, Eastport FL  
See the Minutes for details

## Fishing with Capt. Baz

I don't know about you, but I'm very happy to see more and more of August in the rearview mirror. The summer crowds are always a problem in my business. It seems like there are always boats anchored on my favorite spots or jet skis coming down the beach in our direction. All those locals and tourists out there having fun! Who do they think they are? Plus, this year the heat has been downright dangerous. September will finally bring some relief on both issues, and it's time to get prepared.

The Spanish mackerel are showing up more often at the usual spots. The fish are more active on an outgoing tide, and earlier in the day seems better. Overcast days with calm water are best. There are some big fish in the mix already, but September is always best for the monsters. Here's a nice shot of Jeff Crooks, a trout fisherman, with the first big Spanish of the year...7 pounds on the Bogagrip. Jeff's 6' 7" and makes the fish look "normal", but it was anything but normal. He'd never felt anything like that on a fly rod. We killed it, and Peglegs fried it up for Jeff and his buddy. That totally blew their minds, and they're coming back in September.



Just to clear up any confusion, my Spanish leaders are 8-9' with a straight 7' shot of 30# fluoro (or mono) and about 18" of nylon-coated 26# sevenstrand bite tippet. I connect the two with a 3-wrap uni-knot. It's quick to tie and holds up pretty well considering you're dealing with Spanish and bluefish. I do think you'll get more strikes on mono, but not *that* many more. If you go with mono and want to land a big one, you'll need an 80# bite tippet. The fish will cut right through 60#.

Redfish fishing on the inside has been tough. The fish have been concentrated along a few stretches of beach, and everybody seems to know where they are. They've been bombarded all summer by spin anglers with live bait and soft-plastics, and it's been next to impossible to get them to eat a fly. At least that's been my experience; however, things are looking up. I scouted a stretch of beach last week and counted 20 slot-sized redfish in singles and doubles as I poled for an hour within casting range of shore. Believe it or not, there were even two "tailers". It was beautiful to watch, and I was glad I didn't have a rod onboard to screw it up.



My best "success" during the month was with the bull redfish along the beach in the Gulf. These fish are harassed on a regular basis by both beach anglers and bottom-fishing guides running the shoreline on their way back home. Seems like every time I run east to one of the redfish's favorite spots, a spin-fishing boat is pounding them. But, we were the first ones there twice this month on days with less than a foot

of shore break. First up is Chris Hollingsworth, Franklin, TN, followed by Pensacola native Alex Bell who lives in North Carolina. Many of you know "AB", who runs *AB's Fly-Fishing Guide Service* in the Smoky Mountains. This was his very first Gulf of Mexico redfish, and it was a beautiful 26 pounder. It's extra special watching another guide work his magic...



**Capt Baz**



## August Clinic

And "Thank You" to Jay for the wonderful lunch



## Presentation by Wallace West on "5 Easy Rules for Louisiana Redfish"

*From the minutes of the August meeting, by George Norton*

Wallace has fished the Louisiana marsh since 2017. He believes you can catch redfish about anywhere in the marsh. He finds the fish more abundant and less pressured than our Florida redfish. He focuses on fly fishing shallow water for slot redfish.

Wallace started out fly fishing out of a canoe but now fishes out of a fifteen-foot Simple Skiff with a 30 HP and a push pole. If fishing solo, he prefers the canoe but frequently goes with a buddy who spin fishes in the skiff. His favorite times are fall and winter.

**Rule Number 1:** Fly selection is simple. In muddy water use a dark colored fly with red eyes. A second color is chartreuse and third color is a lighter color for clearer water. On his last trip he only used a dark colored "redfish crack."

**Rule No. 2.** Tide matters more so than Pensacola Bay. Wallace's preference is two hours both sides of low tide which concentrates fish in in 1.5 feet of water versus three feet at high tide where they can scatter out into grass and ponds.

**Rule No. 3** With extensive marsh and habitat, exact location doesn't matter. Cover ground until you find fish. Don't expect fish to be in the same spot you caught them yesterday. They move. Focus on mangroves, oyster reefs and grassy shorelines that attract bait. Look for wakes. Fish are less shy in muddy water.

**Rule No. 4** Be prepared for unpredictable weather as you are a long way from help and cell phone service can be spotty.

**Rule No 5.** You don't need a fancy boat. Most areas he fishes are shallow and a short boat ride. Thank you Wallace.

# Fly of the Month The Sea Streamer by Wolfgang Szutie

The sea streamer is a salt water pattern that fish find hard to resist because of its life like shimmer

Video for tying: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gqm0FWDIJgg>

Materials:

Hook – size 1 or 2 saltwater streamer

Thread – white 210 denier or 3/0

Body – Lead-free wire (sized to desired weight), 30lb mono and Pearl Braid

Tail – Pearl Flashabou

Wing – Faux bucktail (white and chartreuse), Pearl Crystal Flash, Pearl Flashabou, Ostridge herl

Eyes – large 3-D



1. Mash barb and install hook in vise. Tie in white thread and take a few wraps behind the hook eye. Tie in lead-free wire on top of thread. With the thread behind the wire, wrap 6-7 turns of wire toward the hook bend. Secure wire and trim excess. Wrap thread over the wire a few times.
2. Measure 3" of 30lb mono and attach behind the lead-free wire. Wrap with thread to the bend of the hook. Form a loop about a hook gape in length with the remaining mono laying along the shank to the mono tie in point. Secure mono with thread to its tie in point and cut off excess mono. Apply super glue over the area and wrap the hook shank a few times with thread.
3. Take 8-10 strands of Pearl Flashabou. Tie in at the mono tie in point. Wrap the thread to the hook bend and back. Trim excess. The tail should extend about 2-1/2 hook lengths past bend.
4. Measure 9" Pearl Braid. Tie in at the mono tie in point and secure the braid with thread to the hook bend. Return the thread forward then wrap the Pearl Braid forward to its tie in point and secure. Trim excess braid.
5. Note: steps 5-9 build the wing. See image, all materials are the same length behind the fly. Take a small clump of white faux bucktail the same length as the Pearl Flashabou. Tie in where the lead-free wire was tied in. Secure firmly with thread then trim off excess bucktail at a shallow angle. Apply a small amount of super glue over the wraps then take a few more wraps.
6. Take a small clump of chartreuse faux bucktail and tie in on top of the white faux bucktail in the same manner. Apply a small amount of glue.
7. Pearl Crystal Flash - 6-8 strands tied in over top the faux bucktail in the same manner. No glue.  
Pearl Flashabou - 6-8 strands tied in over top the Crystal Flash as above. No glue.  
Ostridge herl - 4-5 strands tied in over top the Flashabou as above. No glue.
8. Build up a head with thread and apply a small amount of glue. Cover the glue with more thread. You want a head big enough to apply the large 3-D eyes. Whip finish and cut the thread.
9. Apply a small amount of UV resin to each side of the head. Apply 3-D eyes onto the resin. Center the eyes then harden the resin with a UV light. Fill in the space between the eyes (top, bottom and behind) to build up a resin head covering the eyes. Do this in several steps using thin coats.

## Ladyfish and more Ladyfish

By George Norton

Be careful for what you pray for. Praying for a good fishing may mean: getting bitten by horseflies, catching nothing but hardhead catfish or even getting a hook stuck in your thumb due to carelessness. Maybe the Lord sometimes is teaching patience and paying attention rather than answering a prayer for an abundant catch.



The best fishermen pay attention to detail. The trout fisherman understands where trout lay in the stream, what fly to use and how to present the fly in certain situations. Fishermen in the Gulf know how to spot the signs of feeding fish such as an oil slick left by feeding fish, the ripples of nervous water or the obvious signs of diving birds.

The ladyfish is one of the least popular fish in the Gulf just because they are inedible. The silver lining is Ladyfish on light tackle and fly tackle are great sport. They leap high and make lightning like fast runs and are known as baby tarpon. Like the saltwater hard head catfish, they are a problem to take off the hook. The catfish can stick you with a poisonous barb and the ladyfish is likely to bleed all over a white fiberglass boat or thrash and stick a treble hook in your thumb as you try to take the hook out.

I was chasing redfish and speckled trout over shallow grass flats that hide crabs and baitfish from the predators. I enjoy casting the fly and drifting silently across the flats as the wind gently pushes the boat. An overcast day with a gentle breeze is ideal for fishing the flats. One can spot stingrays swimming across the sandy areas and schools of mullet sometimes pass right under the boat. The first fish I hooked that morning got my adrenaline pumping.

Thinking I had hooked a big trout, I was surprised to get an eighteen inch bluefish which I lifted over the gunnel and dropped in the ice chest. Bluefish are popular fish in the northeast, but many southerners turn up their noses at bluefish, as trout and redfish are arguably superior. Ladyfish on a fly rod put up a powerful battle. They run and leap. Keep your flies moving fast and a pack of ladies will frequently chase it right to the boat, where they will attack just as you lift a Clouser minnow out of the water.

After adding a hard running Spanish Mackerel to the box, I happened upon a good looking area where a shallow lake drained into the bay. I maneuvered to get the boat thru very shallow water by trimming the motor and standing on the bow to get the boat into inches of water but found no fish but mullet and horseflies that attacked with a vengeance.

A strong fish hit the fly as I was drifting back into the bay's entrance. Happily assuming I had a nice redfish, I was disappointed to see I had hooked a big hard head catfish in the gill plate which I unhooked very carefully. Years earlier I had the misfortune of getting stuck with a saltwater catfish's poisonous spine in my hand and had to be put on antibiotics. A little further out into the sparkling waters of the bay I had a hard hit and a long silvery fish leaped for the sky. After four or five high leaps, I carefully released her. A couple of porpoises came right up to the boat sensing a release and an easy meal.

I continued to catch and release many more ladyfish who gave me their aerial jumps and powerful runs. The two fish in the ice chest made a fine meal cooked on the grill with lemon butter and sautéed vegetables poured over them, but the high leaping and fast running ladies gave me the real thrill.

## **The Minutes for August 1, 2023 Club Meeting** by George Norton

The President called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag at 1830  
Last Month's Minutes were approved.

**Treasurer's report:** Our finances are in excellent shape. Expenses and income were minimal. The report was approved; motion by Cliff, second by Russ.

**Tickets for the Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 12** will soon go on sale for \$35 each. We are going back to Scenic Hills CC.

**Club hats** are on sale for \$25.

**Great news on Bob Myers.** Cindi said he is doing well after his heart surgery.

**New Business:** The water in our clubhouse was cut-off for an unknown reason and the club's flooring is weak in certain spots. Watch your step. Dave Handley will address this with his contacts at city hall in the future.

**Fishing Reports:** The heat in July kept many of us off the water. George has been pleasantly surprised by the abundance of trout of his condo dock, though most are small twelve to thirteen inch fish, with the occasional fifteen-incher in the mix. The other surprise has been the complete lack of ladyfish of the condo pier. In past years, ladyfish provided great action in the middle of the summer when there wasn't much else. Spanish mackerel have been small and scarce. Baz had good reports on false albacore two to three miles offshore. Anyone who has ever tangled with one cannot forget the speed and power of their runs on the fly rod.

**Fly Tying:** We need volunteers for October and November. Wolfgang stepped forward and will tie in September. See Tarpon Bob or Pat if you can lead in those months. There will be no fly tying in December.

**FFI Fly Casting Certifications.** There are three levels recognized by FFI. Club member and fly-fishing guide Captain Bob Montgomery, is a Certified Casting Instructor who will test members at Saturday clinics. Let Bob know in advance so he can bring the paperwork. The three levels are bronze, silver, and gold.

**Club Trip to Eastport** is on for September 13-15<sup>th</sup>. Eastport is 150 miles east of Pensacola (3 hours and 25 minutes driving time). There are many opportunities to wade fish, or bring your own watercraft or hire a guide. The Sportsman's Lodge, Motel, and Marina 850-670-8423 is the lodging site. See George or Wolfgang if you have further questions at the next meeting about this trip.

Meeting adjourned at 19:30