

Flies and Lies

August, 2025



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President's Corner

hope you all have found some way to beat the heat this summer, not to mention the wind and the rain during the last month. Local fishing reports amongst club members have been sketchy of late. But I trust that some of you were able to get out on the water during the brighter periods.

So, to all of you, good luck, stay safe and protect yourselves from the elements. Let's have a great August!

Cyndi Myers
President

Replacement for FFNWF Head Chef

We are looking for a head chef to organize the meals for the Saturday clinics. Joe Higgins has told Cyndi that he cannot continue to carry out the head chef duties. Simply put, the head chef purchases the utensils and beverages that are used for the lunches and stocks the fridge with beverages. The head chef also recruits folks to prepare lunch for the clinics. All the funds are provided by the club.

Club Meeting – Tuesday, August 5 6:30

In addition to the business meeting, Ramsey Greene will be discussing fishing the Smoky Mountain streams. Come listen to his tips and tricks and find out what works! Also, we have the first of two raffles for a guided fishing trip. See more later in the newsletter.

Fly Tying – Thursday, August 14 6:30

Russ Shields will lead us in tying the Go-Meaux. This is a big fly and is well suited for catching Bull Reds.

Clinic – Saturday, August 16 9:00 AM

Join us for a casting program, "Casts for the Coast", with Tom Dempsey. He will focus on the various casts and methods needed to handle the coastal environs. We will also have another chance to tie the Go-Meaux. Lunch will be a Polish stew provided by Jay Bryzinski.

FFI Request for Fly Tyers

[Ed: This is directly from an email that Cyndi sent to me. Please reply to her, if you are interested]

Good afternoon, Cyndi. David Redd and I are coordinating the planning of Fly Tying Programs for the Florida Fly Fishing Expo our Florida Council will host at The Plantation on Crystal River next February 2026 and we need your help. Fly Tying Demonstrations have always been an important program at our Fly Fishing Events, as fly fishers, whether they themselves tie flies or not, always appreciate and enjoy watching others tie their favorite fly patterns. Some simply enjoy watching while others are interested in new techniques to use in their own tying. Clearly it is an important aspect of fly fishing that Fly Fishers International and our Florida Council shares with our members and fly fishing community.

We're contacting you as a representative of Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida to identify up to three of your members who are accomplished fly tiers and would be excellent candidates for invitation to demonstrate their skills at our February event. Therefore, we would appreciate if you could provide us names and contact information for individuals who would be good representatives of your Club for consideration. A very brief note regarding what patterns each would be tying also would be helpful, as in addition to quality fly tying, we will want a diversity of patterns, techniques and materials used to be demonstrated. It would be especially helpful if you can provide us this information by July 6, 2025.

We thank you in advance for your assistance, Cyndi.

Sincerely,

Tom H. Logan, VP
Florida Council, FFI

Please reply to Cyndi if you are interested.

Business Meeting

The July business meeting featured a presentation by George Norton on fishing opportunities in Louisiana. He discussed many of the spots he discovered while living in Louisiana from 1981 until 2005. There is an excellent summary in the minutes.



Sponsored Fishing Trips

We recently have several discussions about the fact that we are a Fishing Club which doesn't do much to promote fishing for our members. In an effort to emphasize fishing, we are going to conduct a raffle in August and another in September for an all-expense paid, all day trip with a local guide in local waters, for two people for each trip. All the winners will have to do is bring what they want to drink and eat for lunch. Guide fees and gratuities will be paid.

Here are the rules:

Your club dues must be paid in full and you must be in attendance at the meetings when the raffles are conducted.

The two winners for each raffle will fish together with the guide for their outing.

We anticipate that the outings will take place later this year when the weather and fishing prospects improve. The guides have not yet been selected.

For now, the raffles will be conducted at the business meetings in August and September, and I am sure will be discussed at length at our business meeting this month.

Good Luck to all!

Russ Shields

Project Healing Waters

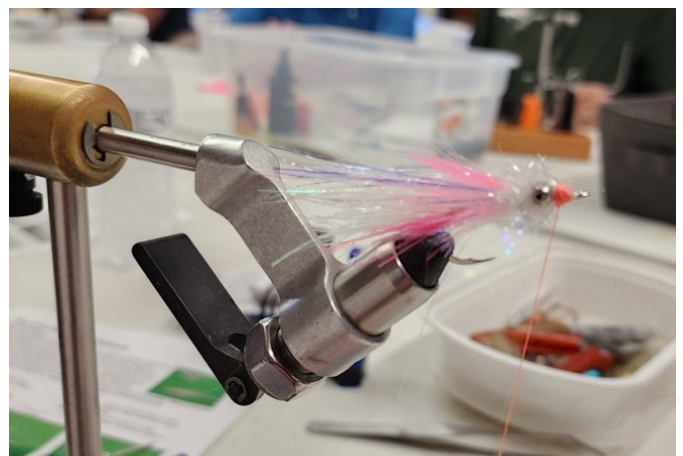


The Healing Waters group met in July to tie the Flounder Snack.



Fly Tying and Clinic

This month, Bob Korose led us through the Lightbulb during the Bull Session and again at the Saturday Clinic. The Lightbulb features a lot of glow-in-the-dark material and is intended for snook at night. As it turns out, many fish eat the Lightbulb, both day and night.



The Saturday clinic had a small group turn out and didn't include any casting. There was a lot of tying and a picnic lunch of hot dogs, baked beans, and potato salad.



Catchy Lures

Thanks to Wolfgang for this link to some outrageous lures. It's an entertaining diversion. The images are all courtesy of eBay.



There are several more lures from various eras at Wired2Fish.

Fishing Reports

July into August...

By Captain Richard Montgomery

I was lucky to fish a few days last month. Both trips were with beginner anglers/casters and both trips were plagued with strong west winds. Both trips were still fruitful with both the catching and lessons. Everyone's favorite grass flats produced the usual, speckled trout, chopper size bluefish, 2-3# ladyfish and several nice Spanish. Hey wait, that is a damn fine list of species for a group of beginners.

Gonna drop a little plug for my Casting Lesson Boat trip here, give it a try. There is nothing better than learning fly cast on the water. Fly of choice for the majority of the fish was my chartreuse reverse-tie minnow pattern. The only problem with that fly it's a very specific color of polar hair so with these species above it doesn't last very long. I have yet to find any heavier/thicker material in the same color and not to mention the same movement. But as we all know Terry Mc's tan and olive Clouser and Bob Korose's Flash fly will be the ticket just as well.

For the wading crew, bigger redfish have been reported Gulfside along the National Seashore. Working these fish takes the patience to wait for specific fish, the legs to walk, and the back muscles to carry your stuff. Start at the entrance to Ft Pickens, slowly walk west toward the Pass. Take specific notice of anything dark on the bottom it could easily be the shadow of the species your are looking for. The redfish on the Gulfside tend to be much littler in color than the Bay fish and you may see the shadow before the fish. Remember redfish lay in and cruise the shallows same as they use deeper water. Walk until your hearts content or your legs don't want to carry you any longer, just remember you have to walk back.

The fly of choice would be EP Peanut Butters in grey and white and chartreuse and white. It wouldn't hurt to have a few redfish crack flies from our buddy Sam Sumlin over at Community Fly Supply. Sam does a good bit of wade fishing so he can steer you right. If sight casting to redfish is not your game, the Pass is holding ladyfish and bluefish. There is nothing more fun than catching the mighty tarpon's cousin with a 6 or 7 weight. For the ladies and blues use the same flies mentioned above. Capt. Dan Storey has confirmed the Pass and Massachusetts areas are loaded but sadly the tarpon has slowed. Only after he and his pal jumped a few.

My link to all things offshore, Capt. Dave Yelverton, has reported the False Albacore/Bonita have yet to corral the bay anchovies so they are still scattered, very skittish, and about 3 miles offshore.

Our bud, Capt. Baz Yelverton took the first of the month off and has been chasing tarpon since his return. He said he has spent the early AM on tarpon then focused on shallow water reds. Apparently both species have had lock jaw for his clients. In all fairness to clients, making the shots to both species really needs to be spot on. Baz can only work some much magic with his push pole; the rest is up to client.

SATURDAY AUGUST CLINIC 8/16: Expect to attend Tom Dempsey's hands-on program, "Casts for the Coast". He will focus on the various casts and methods need to handle the coastal environs.

Gunnison River, Colorado

By Ellen Hoffman

Club members Ellen and Steve Hofmann Fly fished on July 16 on the Gunnison River on the "Famous Gunnison George" section of the river in Colorado. This full day float trip was part of an 80th Birthday celebration for Steve. We used Montrose Anglers fly shop Caleb Egbert as our guide. Caleb was fantastic. We started on the float trip a couple miles below the Blue Ridge reservoir dam and took out several miles downstream at a private ranch. It was a great day of fly fishing with a dry-drop-rig set up.

We each caught about 15 fish each. The biggest fish were approximately 18 inches” as seen in pics. We used a “Hopper dropper” set up for flies. The point fly was a ‘Daves Hopper’ and the second fly a ‘Prince nymph type wet fly’ as the trailing fly. At times we only used one dry fly and cast as close to the river bank as possible to induce a strike.

All fish caught were beautiful “Brown” trout. In addition to the fishing, the scenery in the canyon was stunning. Our guide was Caleb Egbert. He was a top-notch guide. (we have fished with dozens of guides all over the US over the last 20 years of fly fishing and he was one of the top guides we have ever used)



Mirror Lake, North Carolina **By George Norton**

George provided some photos of a trip to Mirror Lake. The fly is a Chartreuse Damsel Fly Rabbit Strip.



Fly of the Month: The Go-Meaux

By Russ Shields

Like the Clouser Minnow, the Go-Meaux rides hook-up through the water – that's why the Zonker strip is tied on with the fur down; in the water it is fur up. This is a killer fly for bull reds. However, the large hook, dumbbell eyes, and the weight of a wet, three-inch plus Zonker strip can make this fly a real challenge to cast with an 8wt. Think about upping your game to a 10wt rod. It will make for an easier day of fishing, and a quicker catch and release for the very large, and beautiful, bull reds



Ingredients:

Hooks: Mustad 34007 1/0 or 2/0

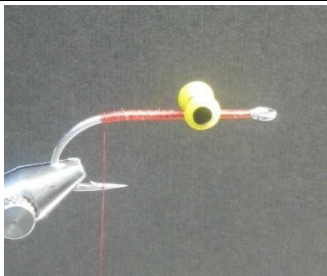


Eyes: Dumbbells medium or large, sized to the hook





Thread: Danville flat waxed nylon in white, chartreuse or red

Tail: Magnum Zonker strip (rabbit) – white, about 1/4" wide, 3-5/8" long

Body: Estaz/Cactus Chenille (white or chartreuse) and Palmer Chenille (white or chartreuse)

Steps:

1		<p>Crush the hook's barb and install the hook in the vise. Lay down a thread base between the hook eye and the hook bend.</p> <p>Tie in the dumbbell eye about 1/3 of the length of the hook shank back from the hook eye.</p>
2		<p>Cut a length of fur from the Zonker strip 3 - 5/8" long. When you cut the rabbit strip be careful not to cut the fur where you cut the leather. I have found that the easiest way to do this is to mark the location of the cut with a pencil and then stretch the leather strip over a hard, round object like a glass spice bottle or an inch and half wooden dowel. Stretch the leather tightly over the round surface using the thumb and forefinger of your left hand and <u>gently</u> cut the leather with a razor knife or Exacto Knife with your right hand (for right-handed people) while it is under tension. This will make a clean cut and not lose any fur.</p>
3		<p>Strip the fur from about a half an inch on the "short fur" end of the Zonker and tie it in above the bend, fur side down, with tight thread wraps, beginning at a point just above the hook point. A drop of super glue on the hook shank before you tie in the Zonker, will help to keep it from rotating around the hook shank as you tie it down.</p>

4		<p>Note: For this and longer lengths of Zonker strips, consider installing a short length of 80-100# mono along a portion of the Zonker. Using your bodkin or an awl, pierce the Zonker about an inch back from the bend of the hook (it's easier to make the hole before you tie in the Zonker!). Cut a piece of mono about three inches long and melt a small bulb at one end.</p>
5		<p>When the bulb is cool, insert the mono from the fur side of the Zonker and tie it down on the hide side, along the hook shank with the curvature of the mono in a vertical plane, curve down. Leave the bulb of the mono a bit past the pierced hole and buried in the fur. Cut the excess mono behind the dumbbell eye. This will help keep the long Zonker strip from wrapping around the hook when you are fishing it.</p>
6		<p>Tie in the Estaz (or Cactus Chenille) just above the hook bend then return the thread to just behind the dumbbell eye. Using touching turns, wrap the Estaz to the thread and tie it off.</p>
7		<p>Tie in the Palmer Chenille a short way behind the dumbbell eye, then move the thread to just behind the hook eye. While stroking the fibers to the rear of the fly, make a few wraps of Palmer Chenille behind the dumbbell eye then cross over and make a few more turns between the dumbbell eye and the hook eye. This creates a collar on the fly. Tie off the Palmer Chenille behind the hook eye.</p> <p>Stroke the chenille fibers to the rear and over the dumbbell eye and apply a small amount of UV cure glue to hold them in place. Do the same on the bottom of the hook. If necessary, using scissors, trim the Palmer Chenille away from the eye portion of the dumbbell eyes.</p> <p>Afterwards, apply head cement or UV to the finishing head threads</p>

The Minutes

FFNWF Business Meeting Minutes: July 1, 2025

George Norton, Club Secretary

1830: The president called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance

Treasurer's Report: We have a healthy balance in checking. We added two new members in June (welcome aboard) and had minor expenditures.

Old Business: Last month's minutes were accepted and approved by Russ and Rex.

New Business: Russ made a motion to offer two guided trips with Richard M this fall which was quickly approved by George and Tarpon Bob. A drawing will be held at the meetings in August and September and you must be present to win. This is a great opportunity to get out on the water with our club guide and casting instructor. Make sure to attend these meetings. Tarpon Bob volunteered to take care of the Christmas Party items from suppliers in place of Cliff who is battling cancer and Dave H volunteered to join the nominating committee made up of Larry S and Jay B for board positions. Larry Sisney volunteered for the membership committee.

Presentation: Fly Fishing Opportunities in Louisiana by George Norton

My Power Point presentation focused on where and when to go and where to stay. My maps showed that Louisiana is shaped like a boot due to the Mississippi delta. I lived in Louisiana from 1981-2005.

The salt water fly fishing portion of the presentation focused on the Louisiana marsh for speckled trout and redfish in Venice, Grand Isle, Leesville, Lake Borgne and the Chandelier Islands. Small flat bottom skiffs and kayaks are best for fishing the inside marsh where shallow water reds and trout flourish.

Fly fishers should focus on hitting drains in bayous and canals at low tide and move to interior duck ponds on high tides. Poppers, Clouser minnows, crab patterns, deceivers and gold spoon flies all work in water that is not clear like Florida and the fish are less spooky. Go with darker colors to match the bottom. Fish pockets in the marsh, grass edges and oyster reefs.

The East Side of the Mississippi River is called the East Bank and is still inhabited mostly by Spanish descendants from the Canary Islands while the West Side of the River is Cajun country.

George's freshwater options focused on oxbow lakes off the Mississippi River such as Lakes Concordia and Lake St. John, and famous swamps such as the Atchafalaya and Lake Verret. Fly fishing around cypress trees and lily pads you never know if a bass, channel catfish, sac a lait (crappie) or a variety of sunfish will hit your poppers, woolly buggers or gitter bee patterns.

Popper droppers work great. It is a relaxing way to enjoy a spring day bending your three or four weight fly rod. Mom and pop motels service fishermen.

In the past I presented on the possibility of a club trip on a houseboat docked on the Chandelier Islands twenty-five miles out of Biloxi. The houseboat sleeps ten and provides five small skiffs self-guided while providing all meals and fish cleaning for roughly \$1,000 each for three nights and two plus days of fishing. A number of companies with these setups are based out of Biloxi and Ocean Springs. Redfish and trout are the main catch but black drum, flounder, Spanish and sheep head also are in the mix.

Other trip options for the club requiring less commitment than three nights and ten participants for a smaller group could be the following: Delacroix Lodge, a full service lodge with room and board and guides (George toured it recently in September on the East Bank.

Houses and cabins are readily available for short term rent in Delacroix, or around Campos Marina 504-239-6377 can offer suggestions.

Venice Fishing Lodge (four hour) where I fly fished for Mahi Mahi offshore on the fly and reds and specs inside could offer a great variety of fly fishing. Call 504-657-5937.

I have toured Pass Christian's boat harbor in Mississippi which is about two and half hours from Pensacola and has a number of guides who fish the Biloxi marsh in Louisiana and the Mississippi barrier islands typically for redfish and speckled trout. Local mom and pop motels in the area for overnight stays.

I have fly fished Grand Isle, Louisiana's' only inhabited barrier island. Bridge Side Marina has economical cabins (5 hours away) and a nice pier to fly fish at night. Lots of mom and pop motels and houses for rent. Good wade fishing in the surf from May-October and guides service the area. Boudreaux's Motel in the Leeville marsh has a dock you can tie-up your boat to with access to the marsh. Tarpon Bob has a state record for sheep head on the fly!

These options could be self-service as you can provide your own meals and boats but lots of guides also service the area. Best time to fish the Louisiana marsh is the fall as the trout and reds move north and inside from the beaches and bays. Fishing in the winter is good but there are fewer good days weather wise which makes planning a trip in advance more

Fishing Reports: Ramsey reported he had a good trip to western North Carolina fishing small streams on dry flies at higher elevations. He caught brook, rainbow and brown trout. George caught large-mouth and long ear and bluegill fishing early on Mirror Lake in North Carolina outside of Lake Lure. The weather was hot and dry and fishing was very slow the rest of the day. Best fly was a damsel fly pattern with big eyes. See photos. Rex reported on a good trip for speckled trout in East Bay and George got some big ladyfish off the beaches some Spanish at the Mass on several trips. Tarpon Bob had a nice sized red at Naval Live Oaks.

Meeting Adjourned at 1940.