

Flies and Lies

September, 2025



FFNWF

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President's Corner

I hope you're all beating the heat and rain this summer, and hoping you've been able to get on the water at least a little. If not it's the perfect opportunity to stay in the A/C and tie some flies.

Thank you to our guides and members for sharing their fishing experiences. Those who aren't able to get on the water share in your joy.

Christmas Party tickets will be available soon. Save the date, Tuesday, December 9th.

Cyndi Myers
President

Club Meeting – Tuesday, Sept 2 6:30

In addition to the business meeting, Sam Sumlin, co-owner of "Community Fly Supply" located in Gulf Shores, AL, will be giving the month's presentation.

Community Fly Supply is dedicated to fly fishing. Shop carries numerous supplies and accessories. They offer monthly fly-casting, fly-tying lessons and guided services.

Don't forget that there is a second raffle for a guided fishing trip. Remember, you don't need to buy a ticket, but you DO need to be present to win!

Fly Tying – Thursday, Sept 11 6:30

Jojo Bulan will lead us in tying the Ugly Duckling. Jojo used this to catch his first Tarpon, as well as mangrove Snappers and Jacks. He uses acrylic yarn, which colors easily and sinks fast.

Clinic – Saturday, Sept 20 9:00 AM

Join us for casting practice and another chance to tie the Ugly Duckling. The lunch will be Oktoberfest with brats, German potato salad, sauerkraut, and red cabbage. Lunch will be provided by Russ and Cyndi.

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.

Additional Replacements

We are also looking for a President and a Webmaster. Please see Cyndi, if you are interested in either job.

Business Meeting

The April business meeting featured Ramsey Green and his experience fishing the Smoky Mountains of western North Carolina. Read an excellent recap of the presentation in the Minutes.

Congratulations to Jay and Larry for winning the first pair of guided fishing trips.



(Photo Credits: Jay and Cyndi)

Project Healing Waters

By Mick Milo



The Healing Waters group met in August to tie the *Sublett's Blue Crab*, the *BMF Baitfish* and *The Brush Clouser*.





(Photo Credit: Jay)



Ron Bloomquist sent me an article on PHWFF that really gets to the point of the program. The article in [Military Families Magazine](#) describes a typical vet that saw the therapeutic benefits of the PHWFF program. The article goes on to discuss the research carried on at the University of New Hampshire and the Boise Veterans Affairs Medical Center. It's a good read. Thanks Ron!

Fly Tying and Clinic

This month, Russ Shields led us through tying the Go-Meaux in the Thursday night Bull Session.



Dr. Tom Dempsey presented "Casts for the Coast" at the Saturday Clinic.



(Photo Credit: Jay)

After the casting clinic, the group was treated to a Polish stew by Jay Brykczynski.



Fishing Report

By Captain Richard Montgomery

Exit heat and hello cool, wishful thinking, huh? You never know what is in store for the Gulf Coast.

I am hoping for cooler water temps and big Spanish on the Flats. Wait, I believe we have one of the two and the most important of the two, big Spanish on the Flats. Let's just keep that between you and me. Now I haven't seen one of the big ones as of yet but I have had multiple reports they are there. I do know there are ladyfish and bluefish scattered along the grass flats. I found the short tie presented by Bob Korose's to work well. I used a Steve Farrar material, reverse tied in shaded chartreuse over white, with extra flash minnow pattern. I hate to admit this, but my fishing partner was using a chartreuse Chug Bug. I have noticed while working the ramp in Gulf Breeze at the Chappie James Bridge (Pensacola/GB) the Spanish have been tearing into the schools of alewives.

As usual Captain Baz Yelverton has kept his clients happy with sight fishing for redfish in the shallow waters around the grass beds. Overall, his favorite is still EP peanut bunker and minnow patterns, colors and sizes are whatever works on that given day.



Hopefully the weather will cool and larger fish will show this coming month. Oh, and no tropical activity venture into the Gulf of Mexico. Watch for menhaden to start showing in the Bay toward the end of the month to signal the beginning of bull reds (wishful thinking).

Richard

Fly of the Month: The Ugly Duckling

By Jojo Bulan

I wanted to share for the club. I used this pattern to land my first tarpon and all other successive successful trips in the salt. I used one fly to land over 20 mangrove snappers and five jacks in Key West during a blitz. The material used is acrylic yarn which can be bought at a hobby shop or even Walmart. Make sure the material states 100% acrylic. I've tied them all white and colored them when done into different combinations. I've also used an all-purple fly when fishing at night for tarpon in the Keys. The material sinks fast, does not absorb water(single false cast will rid it of water) , and readily accepts color from permanent markers.



Ingredients:

Hooks: Gamakatsu SC-15, size 1/0 (Stock Number: 82511-2)

Hookpoint Guard: 30# Fluorocarbon, about 1.5 inches

Eyes: Holographic yellow, 7mm

Thread: Fluorescent green but any would do. I use 2# mono when tying for tarpon.

Tail : White Acrylic Yarn

Body: Rootbeer Chenille






Head: Medium Pearl Chenille or Pearl Estaz.






Wing Acrylic Yarn in white, tan, and black






Miscellaneous tools: fine toothed comb, super glue, glue gun with clear glue stick, permanent markers in different colors.

Steps:

1		<p>Wrap your thread base and return thread to eye of the hook. Attach one side of 30# fluorocarbon parallel to the shank and wrap aft keeping material on one side then move back thread to the eye position.</p> <p>Do the same to the near side of the hook with the opposite side of the hook point guard. Make sure the material stays parallel with the hook shank and extending an open loop about half an inch behind. Acrylic yarn is very supple when wet so this guard is very essential in preventing material from fouling the hook point.</p>
2		<p>Cut your acrylic yarn about 3 times the length of your hook. I use 2 pieces of white, 1 of tan, and one of black. If you want the finished fly to look like pinfish, replace the tan with green yarn.</p>

3		<p>Separate the strands and separate them into three piles with their respective colors.</p>
4		<p>Capture the white acrylic with thread in the middle and tie to the end of the hook where the loop begins. Do two wraps to capture the material tying it on one side then fold the material to the other side and do about 5 to 6 turns over to secure. Ensure all the yarn are tied on top of the fluorocarbon guard. If you like adding flash, take two pieces of crystal flash and tie them the same way now.(Two on each side with material doubled.)</p>
5		<p>Move tying thread toward eye of the hook and secure the end of your root beer chenille all the way to the base of the white acrylic stack. Wrap chenille twice around and secure in place with two wraps of thread. Pull chenille away from tying area to keep material from interfering with the next step.</p>
6		<p>Capture the tan acrylic in the middle and secure to one side with two wraps. Bring the other half of the material to the other side and secure with 5 to 6 wraps. Do two wraps of the chenille then secure with two thread wraps.</p>
7		<p>Tie in the middle of black acrylic yarn to one side with two wraps then fold other half to the other side with 5 to 6 wraps. Snip off the chenille at this point.</p>

8		<p>The eyes need preparation for this. Use three separated strands of white acrylic as the base and first glue them in with CA glue (i.e. superglue). Then use your hot glue to fix them in place. Tie the material with the eyes on each side like tying cheek materials for a streamer. If you don't like dealing with hot glue. Buy some tabbed eyes and use those instead. Whip finish the head and apply coating of choice.</p>	
9		<p>You are only half done because it is still an ugly duckling. We need to turn it to a goose to look beautiful</p>	
10		<p>Put it back in the vise and start combing out the materials. Start from the ends and slowly advance the comb forward. Material will start coming off and get stuck with the comb and would need to be removed from the comb after 3 to 4 strokes. Combing straightens up the fibers and gets rid of material that is not actually anchored to the fly.</p>	
11			<p>Combing also tapers the fly naturally, removing excess material. Excess can be used as dubbing for other projects.</p>

12		Should the fly need additional trimming for a better profile, use the open scissor blades and push the material through. The blade cuts the material in a more natural looking profile as the materials are getting cut with a natural taper.
13		 <p>Color your fly with permanent markers. Do 4 to 5 vertical stripes with a black marker. Use red for gill slits. Use green and yellow spots for highlights.</p>
14		Lastly, put a drop of hot glue at the base of each eye. On some flies, I use reflective eyes and coat the whole thing with hot glue. Epoxy and UV epoxy are both brittle and you end up with eyeless flies when they hit rock, oyster beds, barnacles or concrete. Hot glued eyes flex and never come off.
15		Here is what the fly looks when it is wet. When tied for tarpon, I use a Mustad UltraPoint Demon circle hook Size 3/0 to 5/0 without a hook point guard. Fish it with a loop connection with fluorocarbon shock tippet.

Here are what tabbed eyes look like for the curious. Pro Sportfisher Tabbed Eyes-5mm sell for \$6.99 at Trident Fly Fishing. I can't find it in Amazon.



The Minutes

FFNWF Business Meeting Minutes: August 5, 2025

George Norton, Club Secretary

1830: The President led the club in the Pledge of Allegiance

Treasurers' Report: Larry reported income from dues and beverage sales less expenses for fly tying materials, clinic food, pastries, and insurance with FFI. Our balance is in excellent shape. Russ and Mick approved the TR.

Last month's minutes as published were approved by Mick and Steve H.

New Business: Tom Dempsey from Mobile will lead Saturday's fly casting clinic at 9. Tom will cover all the casts you will need for fly fishing in our local coastal waters. Thanks Tom!

Dave H updated us on membership. We have 68 total members, of which 5 are honorary, and 11 are associate members. The city agreed to re-finish the club's flooring but doesn't have the money to repair the windows. In addition, the city will no longer work with us under a memorandum of understanding. Dave needs several volunteers to help organize the chaos in the basement caused by other groups who dumped their stuff everywhere. The nomination committee meets next month looking for candidates to fill BOD positions and the two members at large slots. Please see a BOB member if interested in running.

Presentation by Ramsey Green

Tips to Catch More Wild Trout in the Appalachian Mountains

Ramsey focused on the Smokey Mountains of western North Carolina where he has 30 years of fly-fishing experience. He has guided fly fishers into the backcountry for wild trout and also taught fly fishing at Mississippi State University. His tips are applicable to anywhere in the United States.

He is a dry fly fisherman exclusively and has not used a nymph since 1997. The size and shape of the dry fly are more important than the fly pattern. Trout have a narrow window of vision so fish a run thoroughly from the downstream casting upstream. If they reject your fly two or three times change to a smaller fly. Color is least important. Segmented flies are better. The first thing they see is the parachute or the wing like a ship on the ocean. They can see the color red more vividly.

Wear a cameo shirt and hat. Follow the rule of six regarding distance from the fish. Carry a minimal assortment of flies in a small box. Hide behind rocks and bushes and stay as low as possible. Follow the example of a blue heron who fishes slow and deliberate. Minimize false casts.

Fly casting in smaller mountain streams is not about distance. Roll casts, a bow and arrow cast and sidearm casts are essential. A drift with no drag is essential. Every pocket, riffle and hole will hold trout. Approach an area from the downstream and fish to the front to avoid spooking the whole area.

Winter is the toughest time to fly fish, but trout will respond when the temperature is 49 degrees and above. Use a size 16 and smaller fly such as a black CDC caddis. An indicator fly is only to help see the smaller caddis. Spring has lots of rain so if there is flash flooding give the stream at least a day to clear. Ants and March brown dry flies in size 14 are good. After late April don't bother with waders.

In summer stay above 2400 feet. Ants, yellow sallies, and terrestrials work great. An approaching thunderstorm can be predicted when rhododendron leaves start to droop. Seek shelter under a large

hemlock. After a light rain get back in the stream and enjoy some of the best action as bugs get washed in and the trout go on a feeding spree.

Fall is the best time to target large pawning browns and steelhead in creeks. Steelhead leave Lake Fontana for tributary streams. They run 18-24 inches! Use orange stimulators. Fly fish before the leaves fall and choke the streams.

Ramsey's gear listed in importance are good sunglasses, boots with felt and studs, a wade staff, a 3 or 4 weight fly rod, a nine-foot leader with at least a 4-5 X tippet, a water filter, bear spray and bells.

Thank you, Ramsey, for a very informative presentation.

A drawing for a guided trip was held and Jay and Larry won. Don't forget to attend the next meeting for another drawing for an all-expense paid trip.

Fishing Reports: Small groups of Tarpon were sighted just outside the Pass but they wouldn't hit anything. I caught a mixed bag of ladyfish, bluefish, small jacks, leather jackets, and Spanish on flash flies and Clouser minnows outside of the Pass staying close to shore. Look for schools of bait or just troll a fly until you find fish. Action inside was slow.

1940: The meeting was adjourned by George and Jay.