

Flies & Lies

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLYFISHERS
OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA
JANUARY 2005

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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

BOARD MEETING
4TH TUESDAY, 6:30PM

**Pensacola....The
Next Bonefish Hot
Spot? Jerry Aldridge**

**Tom & Jerry go Fish-
ing....Tom Regina**

**President's Mes-
sage....Milt Mays**

Big Fish Pics

**Clinic "Quick Tie" Fly
Tom Regina**

**Bull Session Fly with
Jerry Aldridge**

**Casting & Tying
Clinic....Tom Regina**



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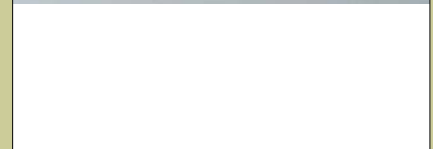
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*Dues are due! Please pay your annual membership dues of \$30 to
Karen Brand at any of the January meetings or mail your check to
her at 5870 Country Club Rd, Milton, FL 32570*

Pensacola....Next Bonefish Hot Spot?....Jerry Aldridge

It was another perfect December day for **bonefishing**. All the conditions were right - temperature in the low 50s, sky leaden and mottled with a hint of drizzle on the way, a cold easterly breeze, water temperature in the 60s murky from a recent rain and low tide imminent.

What is wrong with this picture? Where are the flats of grass and sand, the weather-beaten Bahamian guide poling his way toward barely seen tails in the distance, the tropical sun blazing at your back, pina colodas in the cooler and the wallet full of receipts on your maxed-out credit card for tackle, airline tickets, hotels and guide fees?

We don't need all that in Pensacola. On a typical winter day you put on foul weather gear, launch your boat and tool around the bay hoping for the sight of gulls and bull reds busting the surface for minnows. If that doesn't pan out, you could head outside the pass for targets of opportunity - more bull reds, blues or pompanos near the sand bars, or



perhaps even a school of false albacore.

Or you might do as Travis Akins and I did and head for your secret winter places for speckled trout, the occasional rat or slot red and, believe it or not, the mighty **bonefish!**

As bonefish go, this one certainly was not spectacular. No long runs, no screaming reel, just one more 12-14" fish caught in a local canal on a tan and olive clouser. This one was a little feistier than a speck, especially when he saw the boat. When I first caught a glimpse, I told Travis "It's a striper!" keying on the faint stripes in the murky water. Travis, ever the kidder, said, "Naw, it's a bonefish. And, damned if he didn't turn out to be right.

So how did this lost bonefish turn up in Pensacola? Did he get swept up in a tornado (like Dorothy in the Wizard of OZ) accompanying Ivan from down south? Did he hitch a ride on a lost manatee? Shall we blame it on global warming? Or was he just the first of many and will Pensacola become the next bonefish hot spot?

The Membership Directory will be updated in January and February and the 2005 Edition will be given or sent to club members in March. A draft copy will be at all club meetings In January and February so please review it to make sure your entry is complete and correct. Thanks....Jerry Aldridge, Editor

Tom & Jerry Go Fishing... Tom Regina

On a bright sunny December morning Jerry Aldridge invited me to go fishing with him. It not being a hot summery day I was much pleased with the invitation and gladly accepted. At 10 AM I met Jerry in Gulf Breeze at Shoreline Park South.

The boat being launched, we are underway. With Jerry at the helm keeping an eye on the sky he looks for birds diving on the water. Says Jerry "Where the birds are the fish are". I pretend to know that. Jerry guides his craft around and about the bay. Not seeing any birds and even fewer fish he points the bow toward the open sea.

Through the pass and into the Gulf of Mexico. We stand off the beach and travel east several miles then turn right for a mile or so and there they are - birds. Speeding toward the birds and hopefully fish, Jerry skillfully maneuvers the boat and brings it dead in the water just feet in front of the massive school of advancing redfish. A sight I have often read about. A sight I have often heard about. A sight however I have never before seen. Big bull redfish. So many fish in one place never have I seen. Not even at the fish market. So many big reds it seemed one could walk across them without wetting one's feet. So many fish packed so tightly together feeding at the waters surface they where literally climbing over one another's backs. So many fish in such a feeding frenzy they were bumping into the boat.



Jerry made one cast, got hooked up and broken off. I made several casts. None of which produced. The fish were so thick and so close to the boat every cast I made was onto the backs of the fish. Did my fly ever get into the water where the fish could see it? A treble hook for snagging may have been a more appropriate tool. Then as quickly as they had appeared the reds were gone. Jerry took a look at the fly I had tied to my string, made some kind of grumbling, unintelligible, grunting sounds and threw a couple of his ties in my direction. I no dummy. I picked up on and took the hint.

Then more birds - speed away toward them - beat out the other boats - dead in the water - again directly in the path of another school of feeding bull reds. Tangled line. Can't get a cast off. The thrashing school of fish sounds, except for a few. Finally I get control of my line but now we see only four of five fish. I make a cast. Stripping the fly past the three reds still in range, they ignore it until I start to lift the line off the water. One charges the fly (the one Jerry tied) but I am quicker and yank the fly out of the water before the fish can bit. Now there are only two reds and I cast about 10 feet behind and to the side of them. Stripping the fly past the two fish one turns and charges. I strip a little faster. A take. The red turns. Hook set.

With Jerry's coaching, 25 minutes later my first redfish and the biggest fish I have ever caught comes to hand.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The annual Christmas Holiday Party on December 1st was a huge success as 50 or so of us enjoyed fine food and camaraderie at the Pensacola Yacht Club. 2005 officers were installed: President Milt Mays, Vice President Russ Shields, Secretary David Bernard and Treasurer Don Lupone. Art deTonnancourt was presented a plaque in honor of his selection as 2005 Angler of the Year. Tom Regina was given a customized coffee cup by outgoing president Jay Williams.

Raffle prizes: Bill Locher hit the jackpot winning an 8 weight Orvis rod and reel plus a deluxe fly tying tool set. Joe Higgins won a 5 weight Orvis rod and reel. Karen Brand won a Renzetti Traveler's Vise. Patrick Poloski won a deluxe fly tying tool set.

Many thanks to the party committee, Kevin Cohenour and Karen Brand, for all their work that made the party so enjoyable!

President's MessageMilt Mays

And so it begins again, the cycle of time, seasons, and dreams of fly-fishing in a new year-2005. Perhaps it will be better than 2004, bigger fish, more beautiful places, or maybe just enjoy friends and family without another disastrous hurricane. It will be tough to top the wonderful Christmas Party that Kevin Cohenour, and Karen Brandt conjured up. Kudos again to them and all the great donations, especially Tom Regina and Jerry Aldridge for their many, many flies.

As I thought about how I should direct the club this year as your new president, I thought of what makes the club and fly-fishing special to me. The camaraderie of an eclectic group of individuals makes for interesting discussions. Involvement in outside recreation that is a mix of science, art and BS gives me new insights into the way human beings interact with the environment and each other. And, if I was reading this, I would be thinking 'Boy is this guy F.O.S. All we really like to do is catch fish, and brag about them.' Yeah, there is that too!

Anyway, everyone enjoys something different about fly-fishing, and our club, and I think it would be great to hear about those things. I'd like to see a brief paragraph each month that gives insights from different members as to what makes this club and fly-fishing fun for you. It could be something as simple as " I like to learn

about new flies for catching trout." Or, maybe it is more complicated, like "I enjoy the solitude of a Rocky Mountain stream in the late fall." Whatever it is, I think it would be great to hear from each of you, so we can get to know what makes this sport and our club special. It may be a way of fine tuning what the club does each month to make it an even better experience than it already has become.

I'd also like to have a paragraph or two about new places to go fly fish in this area, and distant ports. And, I thought something about environmental and ecological issues should be something we strive to include in more of the clubs activities and perhaps in the newsletter. I am not talking about becoming a save the whale group, but we should continue to hear about such things as Project Green Shores, or have other talks or perhaps a paragraph on what the EPA is doing for our area. And, maybe we could contribute to some of the local efforts.

Anyway, I am looking forward to getting the boat back out on the water. In another week, I should have a new roof, and be mostly finished with the repair of my home. 2004 was a heck of a year, one I know I will not forget. I hope 2005 is more memorable in the fly fishing department-- though it will be hard to top that 250 lb. tarpon on a 12 lb. tippet. Stu Apte, eat your heart out!...Milt

The fishing has really been hot this fall and winter with bull reds, large trout and nice pompano in the bay. Here are some of the photos. More photos on page 7.



December Quick Ties with Tom Regina.... Griffith's Gnat

Hook	Mustad 94840 or other standard dry fly hook size 16 - 24.
Thread	8/0 black.
Hackle	Grizzly.
Body	Peacock herl.



1. Crush the hook barb and fix the hook in the vise. Using a jam knot, start the thread about two hook eye distance behind the hook eye. In touching turns wind the thread back to the hook bend. Select a high quality grizzly hackle with barbs the length of one to one and a half times the hook gap. Strip the webby fibers from the base of the feather stem. At the hook bend, tie the hackle in on top of the hook with the concave side of the feather up. (*Tying the feather in with the concave side up will cause the feather barbs to slant forward when the hackle is wrapped*). Wrap the thread forward in close turns to the thread tie in point. Spiral wrap the thread back to the hook bend.

2. Select two or three peacock herls. Break off an inch or two of the fragile tips. At the hook bend, tie in the herl by the *new* tips.



3. Twist the herls and wrap them forward in touching turns to the thread tie in point. Tie off the herls and cut away the excess.



4. In close, but not touching, turns wrap the hackle forward to the thread tie in point. Tie off the feather and cut away the excess. Form a neat thread head, whip finish, cut away the thread and cement the head.



The Griffith's Gnat dry fly may well be the all time best midge pattern. It can represent an emerging midge, a small midge cluster, an egg-laying or a spent midge. When the hackle is trimmed short it becomes a suggestive nymph or pupa pattern. The Griffith's Gnat should be dressed lightly with floatant before fishing it. Because the fly may be hard for the angler to see, especially in smaller sizes, it is often fished as a dropper off a larger more visible dry fly or with a small yarn indicator three to five feet up the leader from the Griffith's Gnat.

The Griffith's Gnat is quick and easy to tie. The tools needed are: vise, bobbin, bodkin, scissors and a whip finish tool. An electrical test lead clip is also handy for twisting the body material.



Adding a white wing of CDC (cul de cunard or duck butt feather) to the Griffith's Gnat makes it easier for the angler to see the fly and as Doc Birdwell says "the fish don't care".

Orange Yak Charlie Gotcha... Jerry Aldridge

HOOK	Mustad 34007, size 4
THREAD	Orange 6/0
EYES	Bead chain
BODY	Orange crystal flash covered with 25 pound monofilament
WING	Orange crystal flash, orange yak hair



1. Place hook in vise. Lay thread base from hook eye to a little past bend. Attach bead chain eyes 1/4" behind with a dozen figure 8 wraps. Lock eyes in place with a dozen horizontal wraps, under the eyes but over the hook shank. Spiral wrap thread back to bend.

2. Cut 4" length of 25 pound mono and place atop shank with one end butting against eyes. Secure mono in place with thread wraps from eyes to just past bend. Cut 5-6 strands of crystal flash and place atop shank with one end butting against eyes. Secure crystal flash in place with thread wraps from eyes to just past bend.



3. Wrap crystal flash forward in overlapping turns to cover shank to bead chain eyes. If enough crystal flash remains, take figure 8 wraps around the eyes and tie in the crystal flash in front of eyes. Wrap mono forward in touching turns to bead chain eyes and tie in on bottom of shank in front of eyes. Trim loose ends of flash and mono.



4. Turn hook upside down in vise. Cut 6-8 strands of crystal flash about 3" long. Tie in front of eyes. Cut a 2" length of yak hair about a round toothpick thick and tie in front of eyes. Trim ends of flash and hair, form a neat head and whip finish. Cover the head, eye wraps and body lightly with head cement.



Note: What else would you call it? It certainly is orange, made partly of yak hair and looks something like a Crazy Charlie or Gotcha. And most important, specks love it! I haven't tried out different colors yet but it should work in chartreuse, yellow, tan and black. Give it a try!

Casting & Tying Clinic.... Tom Regina

Saturday, December 18 was the last clinic for 2004 and we had us a mighty fine time. The weather was a bit cool in the early morning but warmed up nicely by about 10 AM.

The cool weather may have kept some members away but we did have a goodly bunch on hand for fly tying and lying. We didn't see any anglers casting. Perhaps it was just a bit cool to be out waving your stick around. We tied the Mr. Ed nymph. The original Mr. Ed is tied with horse tail hair for the body and horse tail hair is what we used. At the Saturday clinic in January we will tie the Griffith's Gnat - a trout catching dry fly.

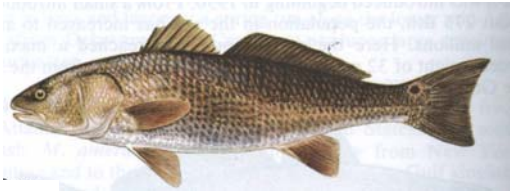
For those who were at the December 2004 clinic, you know how good the chow was. For the rest of you - you missed out. Our Vice President, Russ (Stew Burner) Shields grilled up a bunch of chicken breasts and thighs basted with secret garlic and herb sauce. Along with the bird we had baked potato with butter and sour cream, fresh baked rolls and tossed salad (with grape tomatoes). No one went away hungry.

Saturday, January 15 will be our next and first casting and tying clinic for 2005. Come join your fellow anglers for casting and tying and a fine lunch with drinks. And it's free. Do bring a guest. Do bring several guests. We will treat them as guests and you don't have to pay for them either. Your guests will be welcome to cast, tie, eat and drink or just hang out and tell lies.



More nice fish!





JANUARY 2005

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Business Meeting
7 PM

9 10 11 12 13 14 15

Bull Session-Tying
& Tall Tales 6:30

16 17 18 19 20 21 22

Clinic - Casting, tying
gourmet lunch 9 AM

23 24 25 26 27 28 29

30 31

