



Flies and Lies

Newsletter of the Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida

November, 2019

FFNWF

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

at Miraflores Park
17th Avenue
between
Belmont and LaRua

Business Meeting
1ST Tuesday, 7 PM

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

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

Christmas Party Dec. 10



Scenic Hills Country Club \$30
Tuesday, December 10.

Buy your tickets from Jay at any club event. If you can't make it to the club mail your check payable to FFNWF to:

Jay Brykczynski
4983 Prieto Drive
Pensacola FL 32506



Club Meeting Tuesday, Nov 5 7:00

Dr. Jonas Magnuson will present a program about Fishing in Iceland. This is also the most important business meeting of the year, including election of officers and the Angler of the Year.

There will be a Board Meeting at 6:00 PM.

Fly Tying Thursday, Nov 14 6:30

We will be tying the Two Buck Chuck – a little fly that gets down deep. Looks like a bug you would step on (but you are not a fish).



Clinic Saturday, Nov 16 9:00 AM

Note: same week as Fly Tying. Jonas will demonstrate and teach us "Casting with a Sinking Line." Just in time for those bull reds that go deep after they get spooked by all those boats. Surprise them! Don Smith will provide a delicious delectable chicken lunch. No surprises there! Yum Yum

Club Fishing - Stone Lake Century, Florida Nov 6th

A club trip is planned for Stone Lake on Wednesday, November 6th. The lake is north of Pensacola and Cantonment off Hwy 29. Plan to stay for grilled burgers with George Norton around noon.

Stone Lake is 130 acres and has fish attracting structure; all which proved successful on our last trip (we actually caught some fish!).

Kayaks are best choice for fishing productive areas. There are bank fishing opportunities for those on foot. No need to go thru the gate and pay the admission fee. Where we park is before the gatehouse. *George Norton*

In Memoriam

Dr. Tom Birdwell passed away on October 18. The service was held at St. John's Episcopal Church on October 25. Tom was one of the first members to join the club in 1984. He was featured in the Pensacola News Journal in an article about fly fishing in New Zealand. Later he served as president in 2011. Here is an excerpt from his "President's Message" in the May, 2011 newsletter –

What a great Fly Fishing club we have! In the past 23 years our hardworking membership committees have almost doubled our membership. With many new members there have been changes. Some of these new members are long time fly fishers, but most are new to our sport. It is up to the more experienced members to help our new members.

The casting program under John Brand is great, and Tom Regina's fly tying instruction is second to none. Our newsletter "Flies & Lies", is a good one thanks to longtime editor, Jerry Aldridge.

Learning to tie fresh and saltwater flies and catching fish on flies that you have tied is very special. Russ Shields heads our over all Fly Fishing instructional program with help from club members. This program helps "wannabes" get started on the right foot.



Our Saturday Clinics and lunches are well attended, Kudos Art Detonnancourt and our chefs. Jerry Giles is working on a Kayak river fishing trip and Terry McCormick is planning a Kayak "show and tell" program. We need more time fishing...

A couple of other familiar names from this 'blast from the past' – the program speaker that month was young fisheries biologist named Matt Wegener, and a guest introduced at the meeting was Dan Storey.

Dr. Birdwell was at our club for the Clinic in March, 2018, with his son, Tom. Our best wishes, thoughts, and prayers go out to his family.

My Favorite Fly Rod: **An Oldie But Goodie** Sage RPLX 9Ft 8WT 3piece

I built this rod from a Sage kit in June 1990 while in California. It was built to fish for American shad in the Sacramento River by casting a shooting head with mono running line. I did catch one 4 # shad. The next year I moved to Florida and began using it in saltwater. That year I caught my first ever snook while wade fishing in Tampa Bay. The next year I caught my first tarpon in the mangroves of South Florida. It is still one of my all-time biggest thrills. This rod has been broken and rebuilt several times and most recently I replaced the old cork grip. It still casts great and still catches fish. Over the many years I have used it to successfully catch many different species in many different places like Alaska for salmon, the Bahamas for bonefish, offshore South Florida for dolphin, Louisiana for redfish and Georgia freshwater for striped bass.

In Pensacola Bay, I was casting at Spanish mackerel one day when a large bull red grabbed my flash fly (see photo). Another time a 4-foot blacktip shark made the same mistake. This old rod whipped them both. Over the last 50 plus years I have built, bought and enjoyed many fly rods. This one is my all time favorite. *Tarpon Bob Korose*



*This month we launch a new feature: **My Favorite Rod**. Write up something about your favorite rod and send it to Paul. Could be an oldie or the one you caught your biggest fish or the one you can actually cast long and straight. Please include a picture!*

Fishing with Capt. Baz

The most exciting news for October is the early arrival of the bull redfish in Pensacola Bay. The annual **"Running of the Bulls"** is underway! We were in acres of surface-feeding redfish late in the afternoon on October 27 when my brother Capt Dave landed the first fish of the season. This



was Dave's first bull redfish on fly, and the take was impressive. You can see it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=skfuFUCQPAg>. On that cast numerous redfish refused his chartreuse/white deceiver before his fish took the fly. Afterwards we changed to a grey/white 3/0 "big fish" deceiver and the fish climbed over each other to get to the fly. We caught 3 more before it got dark.

The Spanish mackerel fishing has been terrific all month and should continue for the next three weeks. Here's a shot of Tim Marsh with an average-sized fish on October 15. Hard to call this fish "average", but there it is... We haven't landed one of the over 7 pound monsters yet, but we've lost a few. I'm still hoping for an 8 pounder, but as we get later in the season the fish get smaller. Oh well. We may just have to put up with the 3-4 pounders. What a nightmare!



The shallow-water redfish sight-fishing continues to be good both from the boat and on foot. Picking the right fly has been tricky with the dropping water temperature. Two weeks ago the water was around 80 degrees, and yesterday it was down to 72. The redfish are no longer interested in any color of EP baitfish, and I've been struggling to find the right fly. I got



some half-hearted takes last week on a small #4 tan/white clouser, but had great success yesterday on an ancient chartreuse streamer I found in an old pile of flies. Mike Youkee landed this 5.5 pound redfish on it after the fish enthusiastically ate the fly. A few minutes later a significantly larger redfish totally attacked it, but Mike lost it when one of my knots failed. I tried to blame it on Mike for using too much drag trying to stop the fish, but after he showed me the "pigtail" I shut up.

Having a knot failure is the worst thing for a guide. It was the 12-to-15# blood knot that failed even after I had coated it with Loon "Knot Sense". Losing that fly was the worst part about it. I don't even have a doggone picture of it. I may still have enough brain cells to come up with the pattern, but I wouldn't bet the house on it. We'll see.

A week ago on October 21 Jonas and I spent a couple hours during the middle of the day wading for redfish on the north side of the island. It was calm, sunny, and the water was a comfortable 78 degrees. Jonas had his 7wt, and I was using my wonderful little RPL 6wt. After covering a tenth of a



mile Jonas had had a short strike on an EP baitfish, and I had missed a weak strike on a small clouser. There just weren't as many fish as we had anticipated, and we were preparing to leave when we noticed a very large fish coming down the beach toward us pushing a big wake. At first I thought it was a shark and started backing out of the knee-deep water, but as it got closer I saw it was one of those giant black drum you see occasionally but can never hook. When the fish was 20' away I started dropping the fly in front of it hoping to have the fly sink directly in front of its face. On the 4th or 5th try it worked, and I came tight to the drum. The fish turned and lumbered out toward the deeper

water while I tightened the drag on my Tibor Signature 5/6 reel. Of course there was no way to stop the fish with 6wt tackle and 12# tippet, so I softly played the fish as though it was barely hooked. After about 10 minutes the big drum came up to the surface 150 feet out and rolled around on top like a big rainbow trout. I applied steady pressure, and the fish swam back toward shore to see what the problem was. I "helped" it as much as possible by backing up to the beach and keeping the line tight...gently coaxing the fish to continue moving toward us. When it got into a foot of water I eased over and grabbed it by the tail. The old fish seemed relaxed as I extracted the hook and Jonas took the photos. One gentle push and it slowly cruised on off. Jonas and I just shook our heads. Did that really just happen??



That black drum was one helluva fish on a 6wt and 12# tippet. Good thing I had Loon "Knot Sense" on the 12-to-15# blood knot and didn't use too much drag trying to stop it... **Capt Baz**

PROJECT HEALING WATERS FLY FISHING

On Columbus Day volunteers and participants of the FFFNWF sponsored Project Healing Waters chapter got together to tie flies and make preparations for the fundraiser Bands on the Blackwater. A TFO rod/reel combo was graciously donated by Kent Reagan's USMC Fly Guy company to be offered at raffle at the event. Best regards, *Bob Myers*

PHW will meet on Mondays – November 4, 11, and 25



Unfortunately the Bands on the Blackwater event was rained out. Twice. Watch for updates via email when it is rescheduled.

Fly of the Month *Two Buck Chuck*....tied by Matt Wegener

This fly goes by another name that may offend some of our readers, so I've renamed it after your favorite gas station pinot noir. Two beads are better than one...most of the time. I just got back from fishing the fast-flowing streams in North Georgia and having enough weight makes all the difference. A second bead also helps create a natural nymph outline. This fly can be tied in a variety of colors, but my favorite is dark brown.



Materials:

Hook: Wet nymph hook; #14-#18

Thread: 8/0 brown

Abdomen: Brown thread

Rib: Fine gold wire

Bead: Two 1/8" gold beads, tungsten or brass

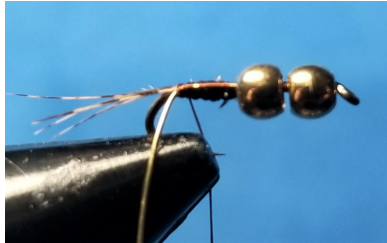
Tail: Partridge

Wing case: 1/8" flash back

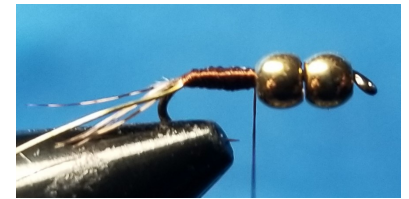
Thorax: Brown dubbing

Legs: Partridge

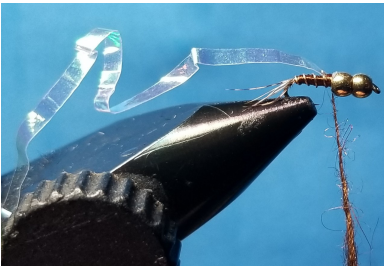
Instructions:



1. Mash barb and slide two beads on the hook shank, one on normally and the other "backwards". Tie in a few strands of partridge for the tail and a short length of gold wire.



2. Cover the thread wraps and build a slightly tapered thread body towards the beads to create the abdomen.



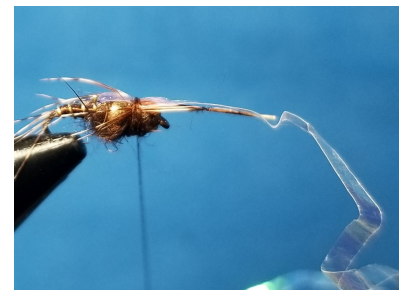
3. Tie in the flash back and twist a small clump of dubbing onto the thread.



4. Wrap the dubbing in and around the beads to form the thorax.



5. Cut a v-notch out of a partridge feather that will be used for the legs.



6. Place the feather over the top of the hook shank and secure with several tight thread wraps. Then pull the flash back over to form the wing case and tie down in the same location. Whip finish to complete the fly.

Fishing Here and There....

Octoberfest and Fly Fishing in Northern Georgia

Besides enjoying **Octoberfest** in Helen Georgia the first week of October, club members Steve & Ellen Hofmann also fly fished the Chattahoochee River. The first day we fished just south of town on



the private waters run by **Unicoi Outfitters**. We had a killer ½ day landing many 12-17 inch rainbows and a few Chattahoochee river bass (known as Chattahoochee Brookies for their colorful fins). Steve fished with his 4 weight Bamboo fly rod using mostly dry flies.



The second day of fly fishing was on the same river but further south of town for '**Shoal River Bass**'. The fly fishing was out of a 3 person rubber raft. At first we used 'poppers' and then changed to tossing large

double jointed streamers near the 'river banks and outcroppings'. The day's results were just so-so. Weather was too hot!! We each landed 3-4 medium sized bass. But it was fun tossing big streamers . . . almost like tossing salt water flies. I had to ice down my right shoulder that night from all the casting. Of course, no trip to Northern Georgia would be complete without visiting the **Bill Oyster** Bamboo fly rod shop in city of "Blue Ridge". I had some nice discussions about bamboo rod building with one of members in the shop. **Steve Hofmann**



Wyoming



Got to fish with my son on the N. Platt river in WY the 1st week in Oct. Had a wonderful day ! We were looking forward to the next day but 45 mph winds snow and low temps sent us packing. The LORD did give us one super day though and for that we thank HIM. Pics were the best of that 1st day.

Bob McKay



VP's Corner – Thank you Matt Wegener for an excellent program on how/where/when to find and catch bull reds. No excuses folks, get out there and catch some reds! Next up will be a fascinating program from our club's esteemed casting instructor, Dr. Jonas Magnuson, on the ins and outs of fishing in Iceland. Sounds very cold but I hear the fish are big! Looking forward to learning a little about Iceland. See below the December 2019, January, February and April 2020 programs. If you have an interesting topic, we have a slot open in March 2020. Call soon as this coveted slot will go quickly! **Jim**

Dec – Oleta Webb presents “Fishing in Montana”

Jan – Steve Hofman presents “Fishing in Wyoming”

Feb – Capt'n Dan Storey presents “Fishing the Okefenokee”

Mar - TBD

Apr - Tarpon Bob Korose presents “Catching Monster Pike in Canada”

Minutes 1 OCTOBER 2019 By George Norton Club Secretary

Board meeting: Club President called the meeting to order at 1806

Officers and Committees present: President, Vice, Treasurer, Secretary, Past President, Member- at- Large, Membership PHW, Education, Fly Master, Club Librarian, FFI Rep

Financial Report: Our books are in very good shape. We have 68 paid members with plans to add 4 more before the Christmas Party. We have sold 26 tickets so far. Cliff moved to accept the treasurer's report and Jim second.

Old Business: Jim ordered 250 rack cards at \$91 to hand out and promote the club. Our application for nonprofit status only needs an official inventory for the application. The 2020 class will start in March and run into May. The Nominating Committee for electing Officers and Committees consists of Rex, Larry, and Bob. Please contact them to nominate members for leadership positions. Christmas tickets are on sale.

New Business: November will be a busy time for our club. We have election of the officers and will nominate Angler of the Year. Jim reported an upcoming PHW event in Milton on October 18th to raise awareness of PHW and the club in general. All club members are invited to participate. Jim is heading up this event, and we will have a table with a slide show similar to what we do at our Christmas Party.

Paul asked for half page articles about our favorite fly rod for the newsletter. George will submit the first story on his 1977 Fisher 7 weight bought in Montana to gish the Big Horn. The club fall fishing trip is to Stone Lake in Century on Wednesday November 6th. A back up rain date is November 8th. George will grill burgers. Contact George if you plan to attend.

Club meeting 1900 The President welcomed two new members to the club. John Ridley moved from southeast Florida and has extensively explored the upper river systems in Escambia Bay while Freddy Thorson was an old member from about ten years ago. Freddy rejoined the club and was back from deployment in the Middle East. Welcome guys.

Presentation: “Running of the Bulls” by Matt Wegener, Freshwater Fisheries Biologist FWC. Every November Pensacola Bay goes crazy when schools of big redfish gang up on menhaden. Matt has tremendous resources within his department plus his experience targeting bull reds is extensive. The bulls average 20-30 pounds and fly rods of 9-12 are recommended. Floating lines and full sinking lines are used. Big colorful flies such as the Geaux Meaux (Oct 2015) and the Midnight Mullet (Sept 2016) recipes are in the newsletter archives on the website. For floating lines go with big poppers or the Big Fly Lips Seducer (April 2018)



Matt highlighted the life cycle of redfish in our area. In the fall eggs from the spawn drift into the upper estuaries with the tides. There juvenile redfish grow and in about one year reach 14 inches. At age 2-4 they grow to 18-27 inches where they seek out grass flats and docks in the lower parts of the bay. At age 5 they are sexually mature and are thirty plus inches and are now known as bull reds. Spawning occurs from August to November. After spawning, the fish are hungry and put on the feed. Baitfish are abundant in Pensacola Bay at this time and head out the Pass to spawn in November and redfish intercept them.

Matt reported that bull redfish stocks are in excellent condition. The run usually starts Veterans Day and is pretty much over by the end of November. They run from the Pass all the way up to the Three-mile Bridge. Last year the run was below normal but Matt and his dad had some days where they caught 10-15 on the fly. Redfish do not migrate and our population is particular to Pensacola.

His tips are to fish 8-11 AM and again 2-4 PM, use binoculars, look for pelicans and diving or sitting on the water, stay outside the fray whenever lots of boats converge on an area, and keep a full sinking fly and a floating line always ready to cast. He suggests a very short leader, typically three feet or less of 30 pound floro tippet. Always support the fish for photos and release them as quickly as possible.

Thank you, Matt, for an outstanding professional presentation.

Fishing Reports were sparse. The PHW trip found slim pickings in the Bay. The Spanish apparently haven't moved inside yet. George reported excellent action on big ladyfish outside the sandbars in the Gulf with Rex and his son, with the big ladyfish getting into the backing on a six weight. On his condo dock he reported lots of smaller ladyfish and some small trout and jacks. Matt took third place in a recent speckled trout tournament with good action but had no giant trout. Congratulations Matt.

The President Adjourned the Meeting at 2020 after the drawing.

October Clinic



Mesquite Chicken



Photos by Wolfgang Szutie

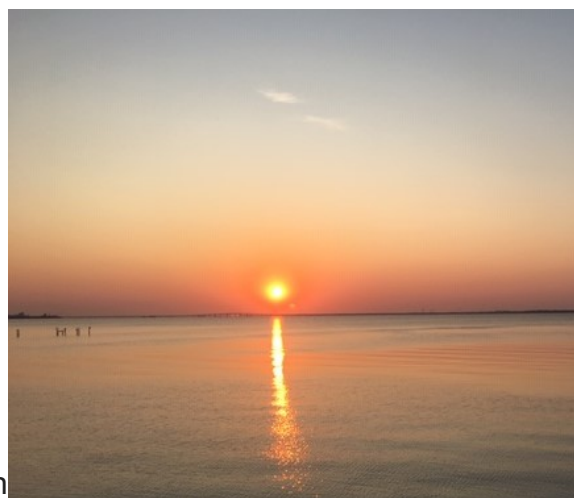


Photo by George Norton