



Flies and Lies

April, 2026

President's Corner

Are we through with Winter of 2026? I sure hope so. March brought some interesting weather that is for certain. I had to look this one up, but March is not going out like a lamb if you ask me. These last few days of March have been anything but "lamb-like", maybe a frisky one. We can only hope we have seen the last of big weather and the water starts to warm.

A couple of items to cover, first if you missed Gary's tacos at the last Saturday clinic you might want to ask him for a repeat! And thanks to Rex for convincing his wife to add the supporting 7-layer Mexican salad, very delicious.

Next, the annual fund-raiser is rapidly approaching, and we could use some goodies! So, if you are sitting on some well-loved but rarely used items, you think is worth tons of money on eBay, why don't you donate it, let the club make some bucks, and take a tax write off next year!

Last, please mark your calendars for the FFI Gulf Coast Council Classic happening May 1 and 2. Let's make a great showing as the closest FFI club.

See EVERYONE next month.

Richard Montgomery
President

Casting and Tying at the Club

Club Meeting

Tuesday, Apr 7, 6:30

In addition to the business meeting, Jeremy Anderson will talk about the Project Healing Waters trip to Tennessee this past February.

Fly Tying

Thursday, Apr 9, 6:30

The Fly of the Month is the Golden Retriever Variation. Leading us this month will be Bob Korose. *(Note that this is the same week as the Business meeting!)*



Clinic

Saturday, Apr 18, 9:00 AM

Join us for casting practice and another at the Fly of the Month. Russ Shields will treat us to Mesquite Grilled Chicken Breast sandwiches.

Gulf Coast Classic

As Robert mentioned, the Gulf Coast Council (GCC) of Fly Fishers International (FFI) is presenting the 3rd annual Gulf Coast Classic fly-fishing festival, to be held Friday-Saturday, May 1-2, 2026, at the Learning Campus of Gulf State Park in Gulf Shores, Alabama.

Registration is open. See the homepage, <https://ffigulfcoastclassic.com/> and our website for more information.

A number of great items are going to be in the daily raffles. Included, but not limited to, are these

- Materials and gear from The Fly Hair Co., Finatics Fly Co., Squimpish Fly Co., and Community Fly Supply and Space Coast Flies,
- Flies and boxes from various tyers,
- Rods, reels, and lines from various donors,
- Lines from Cortland Fly Fishing,
- and many other items.

Upcoming Events

April 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30 Fly Fishing 101 6pm	31	1 Healing Waters 9:30 am	2	3	4
5 Easter	6 Fly Fishing 101 6pm	7 BOD Mtg 5 pm Business Mtg 6:30 pm	8 Healing Waters 9:30 am	9 Bull Session 6:30 pm	10	11
12	13 Fly Fishing 101 6pm	14	15	16 Community Fly Supply Fly Tying Night 6:30 pm	17	18 Clinic 9:00 am
19	20 Fly Fishing 101 6pm	21	22 Healing Waters 9:30 am	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	Notes				

FFNWF

www.ffnwf.org

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May Fund-Raiser

On May 16, the normal Clinic activities will be replaced by our annual fund-raiser. Please consider donating some gear, as well as attending the fund-raiser and bidding on items. More on the available items will be published on the website and in the May newsletter.

Membership Dues for 2025

The dues are PAST due! Dues are \$35 to renew this year. There are three ways to pay,

1. **Pay Larry** in person at a club meeting,
2. **Mail a Check** to:
Larry Sisney 3610 Baisden Rd, Pensacola, FL 32503
3. **Pay online** through <https://ffnwf.org/membership>. A two-dollar fee is added for the online payment.

Project Healing Waters

By Mick Milo



South Holston River

Locally, the group has been practicing standard techniques for tying baitfish. The first session was an introduction to each technique. Following sessions applied those techniques to common baitfish patterns. This month we've been concentrating on the EP Baitfish pattern.



Additionally, four of our members went to the Crystal River for a Florida Regional outing from March 13 to March 16. The event included PHW Program discussion

roundtables and a full day of guided fishing. The accommodations and the food were AWESOME but unfortunately the wind howled and the temperature took a nose-dive and the fish shut down. But as the saying goes "the worst day of fishing is better than the best day of work"

Business Meeting

The March business meeting also featured a presentation by George Norton on the trip that he and Bob Korose took to Belize. This trip is described very well in the Fishing Report section.

Fly Tying and Clinic

Bob Korose led a group of us in tying the Dowski Minnow this month. Thursday at the Bull Session, we had a good group and were able to get a good handle on how to tie a very useful fly.



When we met again on Saturday for the Clinic, we had a great day for casting practice, as well as another chance to tie the Dowski Minnow.



We were also treated to a terrific Mexican lunch of Gary's chicken tacos and Russ' wife's 7-layer salad and cookies. Thanks to everyone that attended.



Don't miss the [Fly Tying Night](#) at Community Fly Supply. This is always on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm.

(photo credits: Russ)

Fishing Reports

By Captain Richard Montgomery

Windy and chilly, that is about it! Okay it hasn't been that bad, but unless you were finding fish and keeping lips sealed, I'm afraid March was a bust for fly fishing. Sure, Captains Baz and Dan were finding fish in the shallows, but you know their technique, sight casting to spook fish in very shallow waters. Baz and I did find some pompano in the shallows near the Pass but just couldn't get them to commit! In late March, Terry Mc and I drown our favorite Spanish and speck flies over several grass beds only to come away with a big ZERO. I am going to be optimistic and say the second week of April things will start looking up with fish on the grass flats.

The boys and girls from PHW had what looked like a great trip to mountains. Even though they had way worse weather than we did down here, I heard there were 20-30 fish days.

If you have any good fishing reports, you want to brag about come the Business Meeting on April 7th and fill us in. Until then, don't let this report bring you down, get out on the water start your own feeding frenzy.

By George Norton

Trip to Belize on November 29-December 5, 2025 (Ed: George submitted this with the minutes, but I moved the fishing report to this section.)

The Belize River Lodge has been in business since 1962 and is family run. Bob and I fished six full days and caught baby tarpon to twenty pounds, bonefish and big snook. A by-catch of snapper and barracuda in shallow water rounded out the catch which made their way into the kitchen for delicious fish dishes.

Getting to Belize was easy and convenient with a non-stop flight on Delta from Atlanta. The lodge is located close to the Belize City airport which eliminates the need for a connecting flight. The weather was ideal with temperatures in the low to mid 80's.

The area is characterized by mangrove jungle rivers, extensive bays, a coral reef and mangrove islands with shallow flats. We tarpon fished up the rivers and for the snook we focused around the river mouth and the mangrove islands. The bonefish were on shallow flats.

On day three both Bob and I caught tarpon and snook early in the day. We only got our bonefish at the last minute just as the guide was sounding the bell to call it a day. The three fish on the same day are called a Belizean grand slam and we each came home with certificates.

My trip highlight was the one that got away! I hooked and fought a fifty to sixty-pound tarpon to open water. The fish jumped multiple times but the fly line somehow got wrapped around my legs on the casting deck and tightened like a tourniquet



and the fish broke the sixty-pound leader. My other highlight was catching my first snook ever, a huge twenty-pound fish. Tarpon Bob also loved fighting numerous tarpon and snook. The bonefish were on the small side. The top flies were the lightbulb for snook and the black snake fly for tarpon.



The lightbulb is a club fly. Bonefish and incidentals were caught on the crazy Charlies and shrimp patterns.

The Lodge can host a dozen anglers. They provide an excellent breakfast and supper while lunch is taken on the boat. Bird watching tours can also be arranged for those who don't want only fish. Any further questions about going see Bob or George about possible returning late in 2026 after Thanksgiving while reduced rates are in effect.

Mosquito Lagoon, Florida

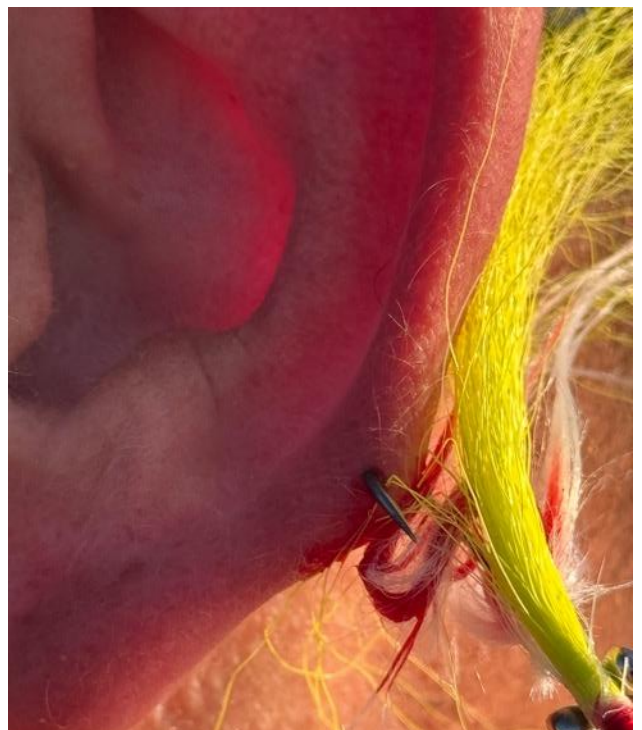
My wife, my daughter, and I traveled to the Mosquito Lagoon on the east coast of Florida to bird watch and fish the salt for trout and snook north of Cape Canaveral. The weather was hot and the winds blew ferociously. I didn't get much fishing time as we joined Audubon for a bird watching tour. I landed one big trout fishing behind a jetty. We stayed at a fish camp called Live Oak Fish Camp right on the edge of the lagoon, perfect for wading with a hard bottom and lots of shell. The water is not clear like Pensacola.

Then my wife and I went to the Lake Woodruff National Reserve for largemouth bass. The reserve is a wilderness untouched by development, and five miles by boat from the St. John River in Deland. A cold front came with bluebird skies and the rising barometric pressure put the fish in a funk. I only landed three bass in three days of hard fishing. The camp said they caught six and seven-pound bass the day before!

The undeveloped reserve of multiple connected lakes and rivers made me think this was the Florida of five hundred years ago. There were gators, shorebirds, manatees and massive fields of lily pads. It all made me eager to return next spring. We stayed at a cabin at the remote fish camp called Highland Park.

By Jeremy Anderson

Jeremy sent this to me after we were discussing removing the hook points in the Fly Fishing 101 class on Monday. As he put it, "Biggest one I ever caught in Perdido Bay! Watch that wind". Good advice!



Fly Fishing 101

By FFNWF Education Chair Dave Handley

I'm happy to report that this year's class is the largest in years with 11 participants. Our volunteer instructors have been outstanding. If you have the opportunity to attend one of the three remaining nights of the course, we would welcome you to come help our participants as they are learning to tie flies.



FF101 Instructors Demonstrating Equipment and Techniques

Fly of the Month: The Golden Retriever Variant

By Bob Korose

The Golden Retriever is a very effective fly that was developed in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley over 25 years ago for small mouth bass and trout. Our club's Jim White developed a saltwater variant that is tied on saltwater hooks (sizes 6-4-2) with dumbbell eyes. When wet, it looks like some of the shrimp found on the grass flats and has caught many species here in Pensacola Bay.



Here is a video of the fly being tied on Youtube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJpH754A3aQ>

Materials:

Hook: Mustad 34007 or







Gamakatsu S10 Sizes 2, 4, 6

Thread: 210 Denier color Hot Red (Fl fire orange)

Eyes: Gold plated brass dumbbell

Tail: Marabou color ginger

Body: Estaz or Pearl Chenille size medium/ color pearl

		
1. Debarb the hook and put it into the vice. Start the thread behind the eye and wrap rearward to $\frac{1}{4}$ hook length. Tie on the eyes.	2. Wrap the thread in touching wraps rearward to the hook bend. Measure $1 \frac{1}{2}$ hook lengths of the marabou for the tail and tie in on top at the bend. Wrap the thread forward to the eyes and then wrap back to the bend.	3. Tie on the chenille where you tied on the tail. Wrap the thread forward to behind the eyes.
		
4. Make one turn of the chenille over the tie in point then wrap it forward in an open spiral wrap all the way to the eyes and tie off.	5. Wrap the thread behind the eyes twice then figure 8 through the eyes and wrap a nice head. Whip finish.	6. Put on head cement or UV resin and your fly is ready for action.

FFNWF: General Meeting Minutes: March 3, 2026

By George Norton, Club Secretary

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

Treasurer's Report: Revenue from the 101 class, hat and beer sales less expenses for fly tying supplies, clinic food and pastries left a healthy balance in the club's checking account. Russ and Mitch approved the TR.

101 Class has eleven students which is the best number in 3-4 years. Despite a well-run class that gets student up to speed and proficient with fly tying and casting, retaining students as club members has been problematic. Hopefully our current students will continue in the club and take advantage of our member's extensive experience to enhance their growth and enjoyment of fly fishing.

Annual Membership Dues: Please pay your dues which are now past due.

New Member Recruitment: Richard M addressed the issue head on. It was agreed the club needs to be more active on social media especially for the younger group. Richard will head up the issue. Any club member who is savvy with social media is welcome to help. Members are encouraged to post on Facebook, Instagram and the Fishing Forum.

The Club Fishing Tournament was put on pause due to cost and rules considerations. The original proposal by a BOD member suggested a \$100 cash prize for three different species of fish from Florida waters to stimulate interest in fly fishing. Richard and Russ voted to pause the idea until a committee comes up with clear rules and the tournament is considered financially viable.

A \$1,000 Petty Cash Fund was voted down.