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THE KINGFISHER

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FLY FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL

Photo by John Lohr

GREETINGS FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Fly Anglers,

Ahhh...Southern Spring - I love the crazy weather and seasonal runs of white bass and striper up the rivers. And the bugs coming back! This issue has a great article about menhaden, a keystone of our salt-water fisheries. We share a story and some useful advice about knots. We even have some new fly fishing "Dad jokes." Catch up with what has been happening in the Southeastern Council and mark your calendar for a full slate of upcoming events. We hope to see you in Rosman, NC, in May!

We would love to feature your news, photos, artwork, and/or original writing. Please email anything you would like to submit, or any ideas you have for content, to communications@secffi.org. Tag @secflyfishersinternational or use the hashtag #secffi on social media posts so we can share your news. Follow us on Instagram and Facebook for the latest happenings around the southeast. Check out our [website](http://www.secffi.org) at www.secffi.org for info on all the clubs and resources available to FFi members.

Kind Regards,

Cathy Valancius

SEC FFi Secretary and Communications Director



Our cover shot is the Weapon X Cicada, photographed and tied by John Lohr of Alabama. His distinctive flies feature chunky foam and lifelike dimension to bring out the big fish. Follow his adventures [@flyfishrhol](https://www.instagram.com/flyfishrhol).

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fellow Angler:

You've asked, and we have answered!

2024 is ready. This newsletter is packed with upcoming events thanks to the great preparations of your board. Mark your calendars for the many fishing, conservation, casting and tying events scheduled for 2024.

There are opportunities for you to participate with the SEC. The best approach for delivering events with minimal effort and great outcomes is with the help of our members. The SEC has casting, fishing, and the Kingfisher Classic committees. We need your help on these committees and in other positions as well. Please reach out to us if you would like to know more about how you can engage with the SEC.

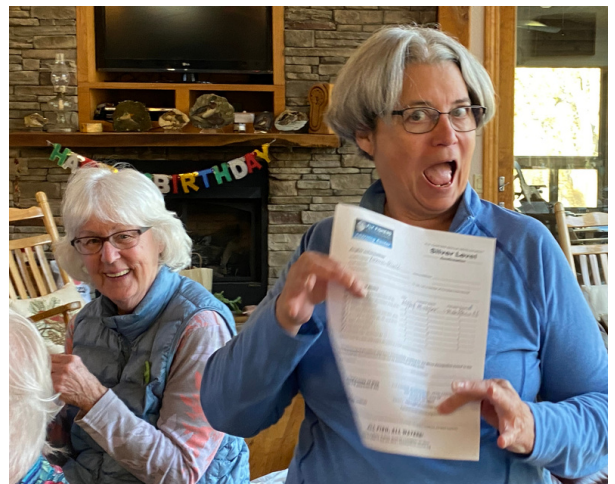
The SEC just completed Board elections. Thanks for your vote of confidence in our Council. I am looking forward to 2024 as the year the SEC delivers a full range of timely programs. By the way, if you missed our annual meeting, go to [2024 Annual Meeting](#) to listen to April Vokey being interviewed by [Bobby Brewer](#), our Chief Fishing Officer. You missed a great interview.

See you on the water,

Debra Pauli

President, Southeastern Council

president@secffi.org



Debra with her FFI Silver Casting Award

Upcoming Events

FISHING THE WATERS OF THE SE COUNCIL

MAY 16-19, 2024

ROSMAN, NC

Davidson River and N. Fork French Broad

Itinerary:

Thursday arrival night 5PM educational presentation by Headwaters Outfitters. Food truck and taproom dinner get-together and hang.



Friday fishing. Guides are available or DIY. Dinner plan TBA (maybe a cookout).

Saturday 7am-1pm River Cleanup with Headwaters and other business sponsors. Breakfast and transportation to cleanup site provided. Lunch trucks and live entertainment in the afternoon. Group dinner outing Saturday night to the Falls Landing restaurant.

Sunday fishing or departure.

Lodging suggestions in the sign-up.

[**SIGN UP AND DETAILS**](#)

Upcoming Events

**FISHING THE WATERS OF THE SE COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 8-10, 2024
MOREHEAD CITY, NC
NORTH CAROLINA'S CRYSTAL COAST**

We will be fishing for bluefish, false albacore, and speckled trout on the coast either guided or in the surf near Morehead City, NC.

There will be a virtual fly tying event beforehand to fill our boxes for the trip.

Click the sign-up button below for all the hotel details, meals, itinerary and guide suggestions. You can watch a presentation about the area on our [website event page](#).

[SIGN UP AND DETAILS](#)



Upcoming Events

CASTING EVENTS

APRIL 6

Atlanta Clinic - Paces Mill Park

Host: Atlanta Fly Fishing Club

JUNE 1

Lake Norman State Park, NC

Host: Carolina Fly Fishing Club

SEPTEMBER 28

Atlanta Clinic - details TBA

Host: GA Women Fly Fishing

NOV 17

Birmingham Clinic - details TBA

Registration links at secffi.org/events



The Southeastern Council WY Trip

August 25-31, 2024

We will be staying at Yellowstone Anglers' Basecamp on the North Fork Shoshone River. There are abundant opportunities to fish in the greater Yellowstone area for cutthroat and other trout. This is a popular trip for many clubs.

Location: Cody Wyoming

Dates: August 25-31, 2024

Host: Yellowstone Anglers' Basecamp, 30700 1st St, Cody, WY 82401

Accommodations: Camp Buffalo Bill Boy Scout Camp cabins

Cost: Approx. \$925 for the week (includes accommodation, food, and gear). Does not include travel to the camp or guides.

Registration: Available directly through www.anglersbasecamp.org

Yellowstone trip is waitlist only!

Have fun if you are booked!

If not, get in early next year.



Upcoming Events

THE KINGFISHER



CLASSIC

PRESENTED BY  FLY FISHERS INTERNATIONAL Southeastern Council

EXPERIENCE THE ART OF FLY TYING

Skilled fly tiers and designers will be demonstrating their artistry. Learn from the masters and tie some flies of your own. Bring your friends and family for fly tying, fly fishing seminars, casting demonstrations, giveaways and auctions.



October 26, 2024

9-4:30 PM

**Lee University
School of Science
Cleveland, TN**

A FREE EVENT!



Click here to register as a fly tier.

The Little Fish That Could...and Can!

by Kathleen Bergeron, VP Conservation, FFi Conservation Chair

It's the big fish— sailfish, marlin, tarpon and the like – that get all the praise when we reflect on prized saltwater trophy fish. Those are the ones people strung up vertically and posed with at the boat docks. That's why it may be a surprise to realize that the subject of a book entitled, "The Most Important Fish in the Sea" is a pudgy member of the herring family that rarely grows more than a foot in length, is bony, oily, and stinks to high heaven.

Menhaden, also known as pogey, bunker, or shad, have a unique place in American history. These are the particular fish Native Americans used in teaching the Pilgrims how to use fish as fertilizer when they planted corn. In fact the very name, menhaden, comes from an Algonquian language term, munnawhatteaüg, literally meaning fertilizer, or "that which manures." Now, centuries later, menhaden are still considered a key ingredient for making fertilizer, as well as feed for dogs and cats, poultry and pigs, and their oil is used in cosmetics, health food supplements, margarine, insecticides and paints. They're not in high demand as human food, but to other fish, as well as whales, dolphins and sea birds they are like the finest treat imaginable. Oddly enough, the smell of menhaden that turns off humans is what attracts other fish.

Like so many creatures, they once existed in massive numbers. Years ago sea captains would report schools of menhaden up to two miles wide and forty miles long. Not so much any more, because they are so heavily harvested for their commercial value today. Fleets of ships use enormous nets to harvest them, then haul them to factories where they are processed. For many years, menhaden harvesting was not very well regulated, and, like anything else that seemed to be boundlessly abundant – think buffalo and passenger pigeons – governments didn't see the need for regulation. More recently, it has become obvious that such oversight is vital.

One company, Omega Protein, harvests almost three-quarters of all menhaden caught on the East Coast, according to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's website. The company operates a plant in Virginia where they cook and grind menhaden for use in nutritional supplements, food additives, and feed for pets, livestock and fish farms.



Atlantic menhaden. Photo from NOAA Fisheries.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) established limits on menhaden harvesting along the Atlantic coastline in 2019. The state of Virginia, though, has failed to adopt the harvest cap, allowing Omega Protein to, according to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, knowingly violated that limit. The Foundation noted, “Omega’s violation of the cap is a clear demonstration of this Canadian company’s lack of regard for the Interstate fisheries management process. Hundreds of thousands of scientists, conservationists, anglers, and concerned citizens participated in developing the new cap. The cap was overwhelmingly adopted by the states and federal agencies as part of the coast-wide fishery management plan for Atlantic menhaden.” Fly Fishers International is included in that group of scientists, and conservationists and anglers and voiced strong support for adoption of the plan and harvest cap.

Meanwhile, nearly a billion pounds of Gulf menhaden, locally known as pogies, are harvested each year, primarily from Louisiana waters. This past October, the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission announced its intention to create a minimum one-mile coastal buffer, prohibiting where commercial netting of menhaden would be prohibited. They also announced their intention to increase penalties for fish spills. This came in response to a series of net spills by two industrial pogie boat operators the month before.

In one of the spills, according to nola.com, a New Orleans based news service, an Omega Protein boat had such a huge and unmanageable catch that it cut its 1,500-foot-long net and dumped an estimated 900,000 menhaden, most of them dead, near Holly Beach in southwest Louisiana. The report further stated that, despite several complaints, the incident led to no fines or other enforcement action from the state. A month later, however, the state stepped forward to change that. Then, on February 15, 2024, the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission voted to allow the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to immediately implement new regulations, expanding the existing 1/4-mile no-fishing buffer of the state's coast for industrial menhaden fishers to 1/2 mile.

Why are commissions, agencies, scientists, and organizations like FFi so concerned for this little fish? Because – in addition to being the essential food for many species of fish and birds - menhaden are filter feeders, they consume algae and other drifting bits of vegetation, and clean the water they filter through their digestive system. Thus, they serve the ocean much the same way a liver serves the body of an animal, as a massive cleansing mechanism. And just as a body without a liver would have difficulty surviving, the health of our oceans and the many species of fish and other wildlife they support is in jeopardy without menhaden.

Tangled up in knots

by Charlie Daniels, SEC Membership Director

“There he is,” I shouted! I had just spent the past 15 minutes meticulously crossing a riffle below the pool I was fishing, and then stalking back upstream to get in a position to cast to a particularly heavy South Platte River Cuttbow lazily snacking on Tricos near the river’s bank. He took my little parachute Trico on the third drift with confidence. My fishing partner gave me a big grin and a thumbs up from the far bank. I laughed out loud as the big trout launched from the water, made a short run toward the near bank, and then charged hard back across the river. The line briefly became taunt before, rather sickeningly, becoming very, very limp. Bereft of fish. And bereft of flies and tippet as well. The stream of obscenity I unconsciously spewed forth shattering the peace of the riverbed would have made Samuel Jackson wince in embarrassment. Perhaps it could be his next movie. Instead of “Snakes on a Plane”, he could do “Lost Cuttbow on the Platte.”

After trudging back across the river, I was greeted with, “Hey, what happened there?” Disgusted I mumbled “he busted me off.” I explained that I had even carefully hand tied that knot instead of my hemostat knot trick. A double surgeon’s knot with a Trico attached to the top tag and an unweighted RS2 affixed to the main tippet.

“Wait, the fish have been feeding steadily on Tricos on the surface and you were using two flies? Well, lesson number 1 is when you only need one fly, only use one fly. Done. Problem solved!”

This solution felt more like rubbing salt in the wound than a solution to me. To be honest, I may have uttered a few more choice words in response. “But sometimes it does make sense to fish two flies”, I argued, “and anyway, that knot should have held”. In the ensuing, mostly civil, discussion we determined that I was indeed tying a proper double surgeon knot with my fingers. However, when I used my hemostats to tie what I thought was a double surgeon’s knot, the knot I was actually tying



Charlie with a nice little brown trout - when his knot held.

was a slightly different knot – An Orvis Tippet Knot. And that is when the hammer fell. You see, I like to use the tag from the tippet, the “up facing tag”, not the tag from the leader, the “down facing tag”. I feel that this presents the fly a little more naturally and reduces the number of tangles from fishing with a second fly. Using that upward facing tag is fine when you are using the Orvis Tippet Knot. Not so much with the Surgeons Knot. With the Surgeons Knot, tying a fly on the tippet tag is prone to the knot failing. Google it. It fails. Important and painful lesson. Heck, I didn’t even know I was tying a Orvis Tippet Knot, I just thought I found a nifty shortcut.

Which knot is better? I don’t actually think that is a valuable debate. I will continue using both knots – but for different applications. As I considered this and about tangled up some folks can get over knots as well as the opinions that go along with them, I realized you really can get by as a fly angler in today’s world with a single knot. Which got me thinking, how many knots does one really need when you are on the water? The answer I came up with is there are 2 knots with which you can do just about all fly fishing you ever wanted. However, I do use 4 knots regularly, so that is what I am going to share with you here, but I will point out the two knots that are “optional”. If you can tie these 4 knots, with confidence, on the water – you will be able to fish in almost any situation.

THE CLINCH KNOT - [CLICK FOR A VIDEO](#)

If you can only tie one knot, this is the one you want. Tie this and you are fishing. You might have to bring more leaders along than the rest of us, but with today’s loop end connections and tapered leaders, if you can attach your fly to the tipper with this, you will be in the game. My father taught me this knot when I was a 4-year-old sitting in his jon boat, and I can still hear his voice rumbling through the instructions every time I tie it to this day.

I have tied it countless thousands of times and it just works. You can tie on heavy flies with it. You can improvise tags with it. You can tie on small flies with it. I can hear the argument coming now, “but the clinch knot is too big for small flies”. Um...no, it’s not. However, it is a little bulky relative to a size 24 nymph, which brings me to my next knot.

THE DAVY KNOT - [CLICK FOR A VIDEO](#)

The Davy Knot has some real advantages over the clinch knot for tying on a small fly. I know I just stated that if you can tie the Clinch Knot you are good to go. And that is just what I did for years until someone showed me the Davy Knot. The Davy is about as easy, quick and streamlined a knot to tie as you can find, and it is plenty strong. I now seldom use anything other than the Davy Knot for any fly size 12 and smaller. As I prefer to tie my knots with my

fingers, the Davy Knot is a true blessing with small flies, light lines and especially cold fingers. And it wastes very little tippet when you tie it.

There is one caution. I like to clean up my knots with as small a tag as possible and I like them to look nice and clean. If you think similarly, you may be tempted, as I was, to pull on that tag after you seat it, just to make sure its firm. Don't. It unseats the Davy Knot and puts you at risk for failure. Tie it, lubricate it, seat it slowly and firmly. Then just clip the tag off. You are good to go.

THE DOUBLE SURGEON'S KNOT - [CLICK FOR A VIDEO](#)

This knot is easy to tie and great for connecting additional tippet to your leader. I know some people have stated that with 5x or 6x tippet you should use a Triple Surgeon's Knot. Go ahead, I haven't found a significant difference in performance over the years. I typically do not tie my own leaders when fly fishing. I just purchase a tapered leader of the appropriate diameter and when the leader starts to get too short or bulky, I simply add more material using the Double Surgeon's Knot. Go fish.

ORVIS TIPPET KNOT - [CLICK FOR A VIDEO](#)

This is the only knot I regularly tie using a hemostat. As I mentioned in the opening paragraphs, the reason I will keep tying it is that I like to use the tippet tag when working with 2 flies at once. The upward facing tag has an advantage in the presentation of the fly and keeping the set-up as tangle-free as possible. Last, but not least, you can make that tag as long as you would like to because it is coming from the new piece of tippet you are tying on. If you are like me and change flies a lot, this is a real advantage.

There you have it. If you can tie those 4 on the water, you are fishing! Yes, there are lots of other knots that have cool applications like Non-Slip Loop Knots and Palomar Knots. Some people may argue that you can't do without a Perfection Loop or a Blood Knot or a Nail Knot. Good knots. I use almost all of them at some time or another. You can survive without them.

Tie these 4. Just remember the two caveats. First, with the Davy Knot - don't pull on the tag when clipping. Just seat it, clip it and go. Second, don't tie a fly on the upward facing tag of the Surgeons Knot. You will regret it. And I just might see you out there on the water spewing a stream of obscenity that lands you in the next Pulp Fiction movie.



Sorry, knot sorry!

Ask the Fly Fishing “Expert?”

by Terry Hackett, Council Board Member



A lot of sports and hobbies have their own lingo, but fly fishing seems to take it to the next level. If you were to come to one of our fly fishing club meetings (Triangle Fly Fishers), you’d think we were speaking in tongues or some foreign language. Heck, even within the fly fishing community there is a lot of confusion with the jargon. So I set out to explain it all by answering fly fishers most burning questions. I am, after all, the most interesting fly fishing “expert” in *my* world. Here are this months questions and answers:

Q: What is a false cast?

A: Similar to a fake splint, you can purchase them and trick your friends into thinking you broke your arm or leg. 🤪

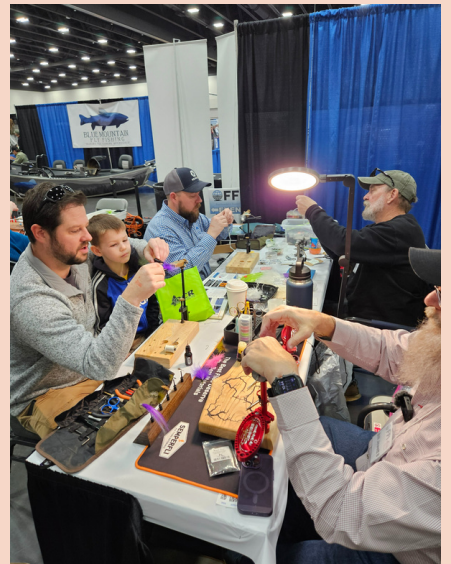
Q: What are terrestrials?

A: Terrestrials are flies tied to imitate insects that live on land but fall into the water, like grass hoppers and cicadas. It is always good to have some “extra-terrestrials” in your fly box when the fishing is out of this world. 🤪

Southeastern Happenings

The Atlanta Fly Fishing Show

Another great show, with a huge attendance. From left to right, top to bottom: Gene Barrington gives guidance, Reid Benton with a happy “customer,” Kent Edmonds teaching casting and Callie Freeman tying to get a new caster going, some booth crew, and Mike Helms and Bill Jewett from Carolina Fly Fishing Club instructing at the vise.



Thank you Carolina Fly Fishing Club for volunteering and generously equipping the fly tying center. We could not do it without you!

Southeastern Happenings



March Casting Clinic

Lee U. Anglers hosted our first SEC clinic of the year on a blustery March morning. Under the direction of MCI Brian DeLoach, we debuted testing for the FFI Bronze, Silver and Gold Casting Awards. Clinics would not be possible with volunteer instructors Greg Stuart, Kent Edmonds, and Guy DeLoach - thank you all.



Seen at the Sowbug Roundup

Southeasterners John Bannister (left) and Patricia Pezza (right) tying flies out at the annual Sowbug Roundup expo in Arkansas.

Southeastern Happenings

2024 Annual Southeastern Council Member Meeting

On March 19, we had our virtual annual Council membership meeting. It featured fly-fishing guide, personality and businesswoman April Vokey, owner of [anchoredoutdoors.com](https://www.anchoredoutdoors.com) click on the links for the meeting and a fascinating interview.

Interview with April Vokey recording



Meeting recording



If you or your club have news you would like to share, please let us know. We would like to share your news and accomplishments. Email us at communications@secffi.org



Southeastern Council

Southeastern Council Board News

You overwhelmingly approved the slate of board members for another term, thank you!

We are seeking board members for the following:

Communications Director

We need someone who is comfortable using/learning to use mailchimp to send ordinary announcements and routine communications to the membership. This includes working with online files/images in google drive and Canva. Oversee social media content, create some facebook event listings and event registrations.

Newsletter Editor

We are looking for a person to produce our quarterly newsletter, "The Kingfisher." It is produced in Canva and requires being able to gather, manipulate and caption images, solicit and edit articles, and occasionally write an article. If you have produced a club newsletter, this will be up your alley.

Treasurer

Seeking someone with some accounting or bookkeeping experience; comfortable working with Quicken or willing to learn; comfortable with online transactions and platforms like Paypal and Venmo.

Please email president@secfffi.org, if you are interested in volunteering for the Southeastern Council.