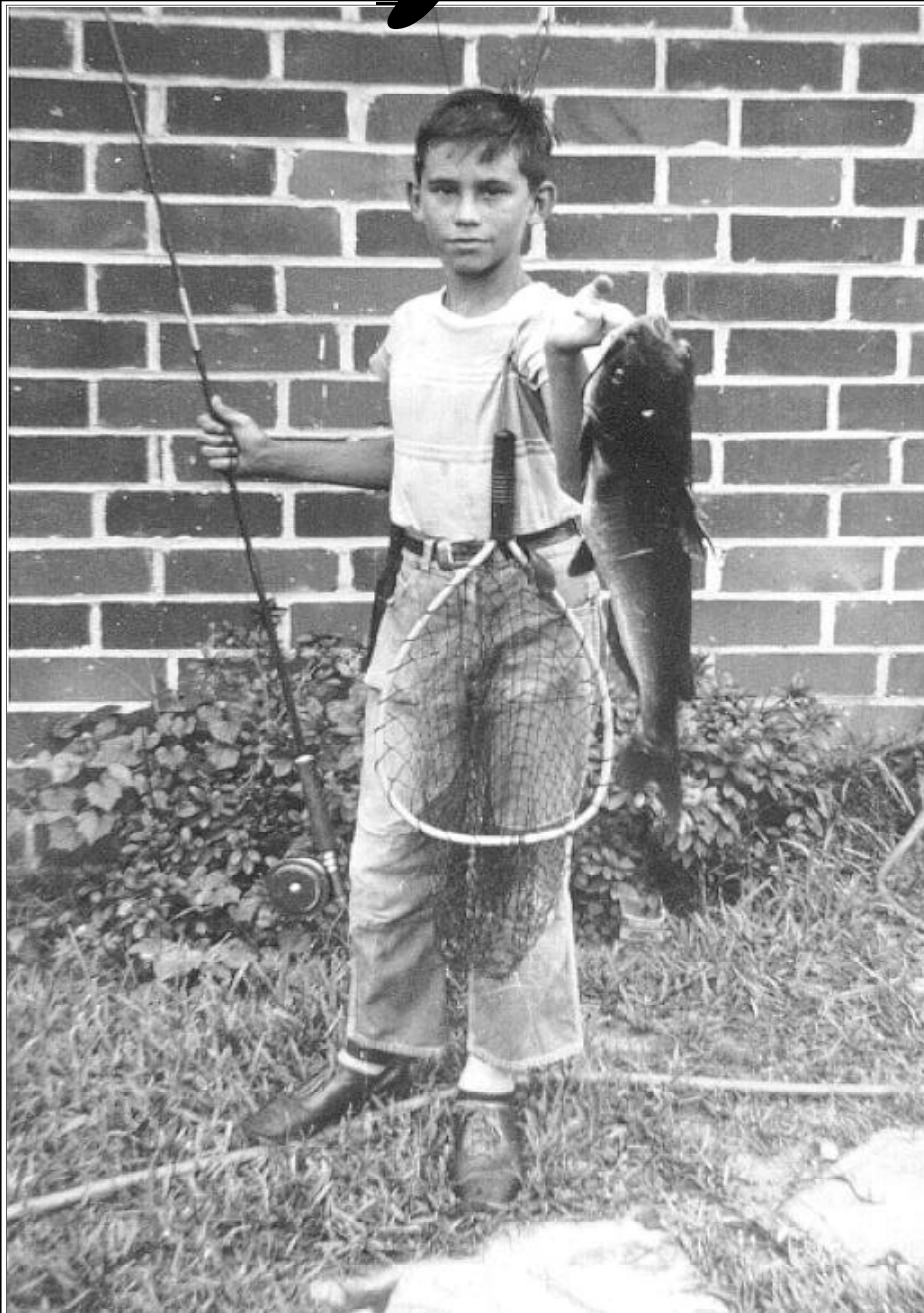


Fly Fisher

First Coast

February, 2001

Jacksonville, Florida



CATFISH AND FLYROD, c.1951

This mystery flyrodder has been throwing flies to bass, bream, gar, crappie, catfish, and saltwater fish for more than 50 years? Who is he? See page 6.

Games, Food, Fishing and Fun

Mark Your Calendar For FCFF's Annual Family Day Sat., March 24

JON CAVE
CASTING DAY APRIL 28

FISH MOSQUITO LAGOON MARCH 10-11
FLY TYING TUESDAY, MARCH 1 & 8
STRIPER FISHING, ROANOKE RIVER, EARLY MAY
HIWASSEE RIVER TRIP JUNE 6-9

MEETING TIME AND DATE

SOUTHPOINT MARRIOTT
MONDAY, MARCH 5
CASTING PROGRAM 5:30
MEETING 7 PM

SPEAKER

JIMMY HARRIS,
UNICOI OUTFITTERS

TOPIC

Fly Fishing For GA s
Trophy Trout Near Unicoi

Fly Fishing Education, Guides, & Casting Are 2001 Priorities

by David Lambert

Thanks for allowing me the opportunity to take the FCFF helm for 2001.

If you are not:

- A. Catching the fish you want;
- B. Casting as well as you should;
- C. Tying flies as well as you'd like;
- D. Fly fishing the great spots in the state and region;
- E. Involving your spouses or kids in fly fishing;
- F. Learning from the best fly fishing speakers;

Then you are not taking advantage of all that First Coast Fly Fishers has to offer.

I've been to quite a few fly clubs in the Southeast, either as a visitor or a speaker; let me say this unequivocally: First Coast Fly Fishers absolutely is the best club in the region. We have the best programs, the most outings, the finest year-end banquet, and best educational package of all of them. It's true!

We're the best because we have a cadre of dedicated players who work to bring it about; it doesn't happen on its own. And, of course, we have created the funding to make it all run. We've done a good job. It hasn't been painless, but we're the better for it.

I'm proud of FCFF and I hope you are, too.

This year the board of directors and I are putting our efforts toward fly fishing education. The quickest route to effective fly fishing is to learn from a person who is involved with on a daily basis; in short, a guide or instructor.

Utilizing a guide or instructor is the cheapest, quickest way to learn to fly fish well!

Think about it. A fly fishing guide/instructor can show you where to fish, how to fish, which flies work (and which don't), what tides to fish, what weather patterns are best, how to cast, which approach is better, how to fight fish, and how to land fish. All of those acquired skills for less than it costs to feed a party of four at decent restaurant.

Yet many of you haven't utilized these tremendous resources.

Guide Trips Ruffled Monthly

To help shorten the learning curve, FCFF will raffle a trip for two with one of our member-guides at each meeting. If you and a buddy win the raffle you'll learn all of the above, get to know our superior local guides. . .and you'll catch fish while you're learning.

FCFF has nearly a dozen member guides/instructors. In 2001, our member-guides and instructors are committed to helping you fool fish with a fly.

Make sure you take advantage of this special incentive offered to you at each meeting. This is a great chance to get to know our guides and learn our area very quickly. But you have to be at the meetings to participate.

Casting Evaluation Begins In March

Casting instruction is second coordinated push from the club in 2001. The fact is, no matter how much you know about fly fishing, if you can't get the fly in front of the fish, you're not in the game. So we're starting a program of progressive instruction and casting evaluation this year for any member who wants to participate.

It begins with the first evaluation, prior to the March meeting. Be at the Marriott pond at 5:30 p.m. our instructors will evaluate your casting skills. They will note your weaknesses on a skills sheet, which they'll use as the basis for progress evaluation each month. On a Saturday to be announced later, we'll put you through a casting obstacle course. Then at the end of the program, we'll run you through the same casting obstacle course and evaluate your success. It'll be fun and you'll learn to cast effectively as well.

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NEWSLETTER

David Lambert

Fishskin Glass Minnow

Tough Fly, Easy Tie



Fly tiers are an unusual group. We are constantly looking for a “better mousetrap.”

I recently ran across a relatively new

material called “fishskin.” This plastic material is flexible, durable, and has flash (in the form of sparkling glitter pieces) built into it. The material is easy to work with, really stands up to the “toothy” hazards of fly-fishing, and makes a beautiful fly. It also makes a good nymph, shrimp, or scud back.

Fishskin glass minnows may be tied large or small (try them on freshwater hooks for trout and bass using the smaller 1/4” tubing and smaller eyes). The fishskin material comes in a good variety of colors such as clear, black, light blue, green, hot lime, red, orange, and more.

The packages of fishskin are available from Cabela’s and Bob Marriott’s catalogs (and undoubtedly many others). I made a “fish template” (to trace around) out of an old plastic milk jug, but a piece of cardboard (such as the cardboard stiffener inside a new shirt when you first open the package) would work and last for numerous flies.

For thread you really need to use a good strong thread such as size “G,” size “A” (rod building), flat nylon, or even kevlar. This is because you really need to pull down hard as you secure the rear and nose of the fly. I add a drop of super glue to the thread wraps at the front and rear to lock them to the tubing. As I coat the head of the fly with epoxy I also apply a light coat to the thread wraps at the tail. This helps to protect the fly from sharp teeth. Using epoxy makes the fly heavier, Softex will make it a little lighter.

So, if you want to tie a good looking fly that will stand up to the toothy creatures we go after, and best of all catch fish, give a fishskin minnow a try. Tying instructions follow:



Tying Instructions

Hook: Mustad 7766 or 34011, or equivalent, size 4 to 2/0

Thread: White 3/0

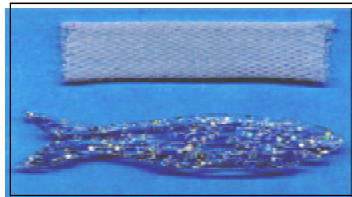
Body: Fishskin inside 1/2” Clear Orvis Flexo Tubing

Eye: 3/16” Epoxy covered stick on eyes

Gill: Red acrylic paint

Head: Coated with clear epoxy or softex

1. Cut a minnow shaped body about 2” long and 1/2” wide from fishskin (smaller size hooks). Cut a piece of flexo tube the same



length as from the nose of the minnow to the “wrist” of the tail. Insert the fish body into the tubing. Tweezers may help here. It should fill the tubing top to bottom but not be “bent over and cramped.”

2. Slide the fishskin / minnow assembly onto a long, stout pin. The pin should go through the tubing, and alongside but not through the fishskin. Mount the pin in the vise with the “nose” of the minnow facing out and the “top” on top.



3. Start thread on top the flexo tube at the “wrist” and securely wrap the tubing

Fly Tiers

Corner *with* Kevin Cohenour

down onto the fishskin and pin. Holding the back edge of the tubing in your non-tying hand and wrapping immediately in front of your fingertips, will help prevent the thread from slipping off. Hold the tag end in your non-tying hand as you grip the tubing onto the minnow and pin. Try to keep the wraps just back from the end of the tubing or they will slide off. When securely attached whip finish and cut thread. Add several drops of liquid super glue to prevent the wraps from slipping off as you work on the rest of the fly.



4. Slide the assembly of the pin. Measure with the hook to determine where the bend of the hook will come out of the tubing when the front of the tubing is secured immediately in back of the hook eye. Insert the eye of the hook through that point and push forward until the hook eye appears from the tubing. Insert hook in vise.



5. Gather the tubing at the front in your tying hand and hold it tight to the hook by the front edge. Start the thread with your other hand and wrap tightly to



secure the tubing to the hook. Make a taper from the hook eye up onto the tubing. Whip finish, cut thread and cement. Add super glue to the thread wraps area.

6. Coat the “head” area (from the eye to about the 1/4 hook shank position) with epoxy or softex. When dry, add mylar stick on eyes. Add a red gill behind the eyes. When the paint is dry, coat the head with epoxy. You may add a lateral line down each side with a permanent marker if desired.

Annual FCFF Family Day Set For March 24:

WE'LL PROVIDE FOOD, FUN, & GOOD TIMES

Last March we tried something new for our club. . . a family day. The response was so great that it surprised all of us; nearly 60 FCFFers showed up for fishing, food, fun, and general good times. We heard so many great comments on the event that we planned another one right then and there.

Well, the time's come around again. This year, come join us again for a *the FCFF Family Fun Day on Saturday, March 24, at Doug And Teresa Moore's M & M Dairy, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.* This is a great time for all of to get together and play a little, fish a little, compete a little, and generally just have a fun time.

The Moore's have a party pond and a screened pavilion at their dairy off Holstein Rd (close to New Belin). We'll have lots of events and activities for every member of the family. *Some of the goodies we have planned are hay rides and kids games, good fishing in the farm pond, horse shoes, volleyball, casting instruction for kids and spouses, and a new casting competency course (which is enough to test the mettle of any caster!)*

This year we're bringing a special consultant to teach "How To Make A Memory Book." If you saw the memory book we awarded past president Don Butler at this year's banquet, you'll know this is a treasured gift. We'll show how it's

assembled. We need a head count for this project so we can bring in enough materials. Please call Melanie Ricks to express your interest, 744-1897.

Also this year we've tapped the resources of *Capt. Jerry Knight's Ponte Vedra Fly Fishing School* to provide you with casting and fly fishing instruction. Jerry's a club member-guide who is widely known for his expertise in casting and fly fishing. Don't miss this opportunity to learn for one of our best.

This year's family day will be a great time with lots of fun for everyone. So, come on down. Bring the whole the whole troop and join us for the *Annual FCFF Family Day*.

FINDING THE BIG REDS OF THE NORTH MOSQUITO LAGOON

by Capt. Warren Hinrichs

I have had the great fortune to fish with *Capt. Joe Catigano* (contributing FCFF guide) in the North Mosquito Lagoon many times over the last few years. Joe likes to fish the areas from Turtle Mound to Haulover Canal, which is within the Canaveral National Seashore and Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge boundaries. Hundreds of islands, bays and flats in this stretch of the Mosquito allow you uncrowded fishing area even on normally busy weekends. Another plus: Canoers and kayakers have access to this unique area, too. And the paddle is well worth the effort.

If you want to get on the early morning tailers, you need to leave Jacksonville around 4:30 a. m. When you reach the north Mosquito Lagoon area, several ramps are close enough to the action to have you there in very little time: *River Breeze Park, Le Fils*, and the public boat ramps located on the Canaveral National Seashore & Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge are all excellent ramps.

On a recent trip with Capt. Catigano, the

weather wasn't perfect, but I new we would catch fish anyway. We ran through the maze of islands, oyster bars, and ancient coral heads on our way to the first spot.

I stripped the line and soon felt a ferocious thump. The line started to jump off the deck through my fingers.

The tide was extremely low and humps of coral whizzed by inches below, each capable of knocking off a lower unit. Joe took me to a school of large 18-lb. redfish in 4-5ft. of water. The skies were overcast and the water was a little choppy, but Joe wasted no time in finding the school.

As I started casting, a few rays of sunlight beamed through the clouds and the dark shadows turned into a copper glow. I cast a yellow grizzly Sea-ducer into the ball of fins and scales. I stripped the fly. Soon I felt a ferocious thump and the line started to jump off the deck through my fingers. After several minutes of fighting the fish

with the fly line on the reel, the hook pulled and the fish slowly swam off. I was disappointed, but just fooling one of the big fish with hackles and steel was good enough.

Later that afternoon we made our way south along the western shoreline. As we poled around a point in his Action Craft, we started seeing signs of fish. The afternoon sun warmed our backs and illuminated the water like an aquarium. The next thing you know were up to our arm pits in smaller schooling redfish. For the next hour we took turns chasing, catching and releasing reds. What a day!

If you're interested in fishing the North Lagoon, I would strongly recommend booking Joe Catigano. It's great fishing, and great country, but the numerous oyster bars, sand bars, small islands, coral humps, can make the area daunting and maybe a little dangerous for the uninitiated.

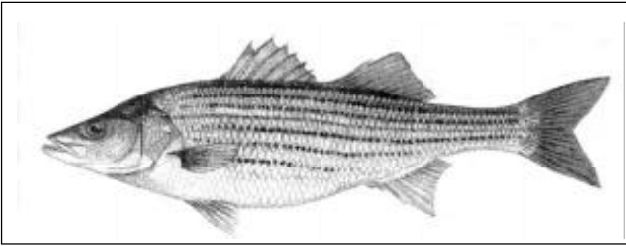
If you're up for an adventure, give Capt. Joe Catigano a call at (904) 673-5710, or check out his website: www.mosquitolagoon.com

ROANOKE RIVER NORTH CAROLINA SPAWNING STRIPERS IN MAY

by Bud Larsen

FCFF will be returning to the *Roanoke River* to fish for stacked up, spawning stripers at Weldon, NC. My previous article in the December Fly Fisher provides more details. This is an easy, one day drive on I-95 all the way. The river is too deep to wade and you must fish

from a boat. Tall hardwoods border the river on both sides and protect it from the wind so smaller boats



are suitable. (We saw a couple of canoes last year.) Under ideal circumstances you would book a guide for the first day and then fish on your own thereafter. The guides charge \$450 per day for 2 fly fishers. The *first week in May* is the peak of the season, the number of good fly fishing guides is limited, and the better ones book up early. Therefore, if you want to book a guide contact me at your earliest convenience. On the

other hand, if you will be fishing on your own without a guide, you can wait until the last minute to decide to go because there are plenty of motels nearby.

You will need one item of specialized equipment: a Cortland lead core 13, sinking shooting head with braided running line. Buy it now and practice using it before the trip for best results. An 8 or 9 wt. rod will handle this well. You will also need to tie/buy some 3/0 Clouser streamers with heavy eyes.

On a good day this river can yield 100 stripers per boat for two fly fishers, during the peak season. This is a unique opportunity for a beginning fly fisher to experience many tugging lines to strengthen a newly forming habit. If you want more information, contact Bud Larsen, at work 398-0055, or home 724-9187.

Sign Up For June's Hiwassee River Tailwater Expedition, Reliance, TN

by Bud Larsen

FCFF had a very successful expedition to the Hiwassee River in 1999 and we intended to return in 2000. Contradictory information began to be heard, but Wanda Taylor just informed me that the fall season of 2000 was the most productive fall in recent years.

So this year FCFF will return to fish the Hiwassee on June 6-9.

Here is some background information: The Hiwassee tailwater was judged to be one of America's 100 best trout streams by Trout Unlimited. This is a big river, 75 to 100 yards wide, at the shallow, stairstep shoals. The stretch we will fish is classified as a "Tennessee Scenic River" and there is no commercial development. There are *big holdover rainbows and browns*, especially in the special regulations, 3.5 mile trophy section. These big fish are most active when TVA is operating two generators and the river is running full. These conditions are best coped with by a guide with a McKenzie

style drift boat. There is a lower portion of the river that can be fished with a float tube when two generators are running. When the generators are off the river can be waded.

TVA "guarantees" sufficient water releases for recreational purposes after Memorial Day, hence our first week in June scheduling. The guides charge \$300 per full day for two fly fishers. Last time we were able to rent a large lodge that slept 10 people (two doubles and three over-and-under bunk beds). This kept our group together and added to the camaraderie.

If you want to be a part of this fun trip, make a commitment at your earliest convenience to ensure that you will have a guide and boat available. Call Bud Larsen for more information at work 398-0055, or home 724-9187.

Please send e-mail to larsentl@excite.com

Please Support These Contributing Guides, Instructors, and Fly Shops

Member guides, instructors, and local fly shops donate trips, time, knowledge and products to the First Coast Fly Fishers throughout the year and for our annual fund raisers. When you plan a fishing trip, please support them buy booking trips, lessons, and patronizing their shops.

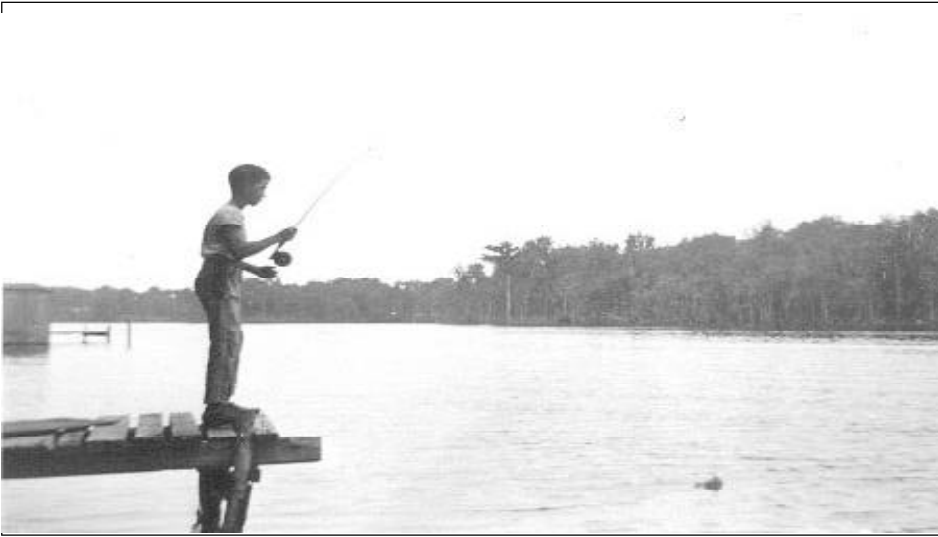
Capt John Bottko	645-8998
Capt Bill Fluharty	241-1511
Capt Warren Hinrichs	384-0996
Instr Jerry Knight	285-5411
Instr David Lambert	249-2075
Capt Larry Minard	285-7003
Capt Doug Moore	757-3323
Capt. Steve Moore	824-2621
Capt Jim Stockton	285- 4884

Capt. Joe Catigano,	904-673-5710
Cpt. Steve Kirkpatrick,	354-493-2279
Cpt. Marsha Foosaner,	561-287-5377
John Smitherman, TN	615-371-1965
Todd Rogers, GA	912-435-6390

Fore-Casters
53 King St.
St. Augustine, FL 32084
904-827-0606

Salty Feather
3733 S side Blvd. #9
Jacksonville, FL 32216
904-645-8998

Tidewater Outfitters
40 Amelia Circle
Amelia Island, FL 32035
904/261-2202



Mystery Fly Fisher Is FCFF's Ted Mayhew

Here Ted Mayhew Hauls In A Fly-Caught Catfish, ca. 1951, At His Parents's Dock on Cedar River. Note The Lack of Buildings Along The River In This Photograph

March Outing

Fish The Mosquito Lagoon With FCFF

by *Mike Head*

Our March outing will be at *Titusville Mosquito Lagoon on Sat. March 10-Sun 11*. We will meet at the S.R. 210 truck-stop at 4 a.m. and gather all who want to start early. A group of us will be camping out Saturday night on a spoil island.

Anyone who'd like to join us, bring your own gear. There is no camping in the refuge; if you have an RV, you can camp by the Marine Patrol on S.R. 406 at the north end of Titusville.

We will camp on the islands west of the Haulover Boat Ramp. Depending on wind direction, we plan to fish around *Dummit Cove*, and the flats east of Haulover. Anybody coming down on Sunday who does not have a boat will be met at the Haulover Boat Ramp at 7:30 a.m. Please let us now if you plan to fish Sunday and would like to be picked up at the ramp. Directions to the Haulover Ramp: Take I-95 south to S.R. 442. Turn left and travel to U.S. 1.

Turn right on U.S. 1 (south). Go south on U.S. 1 to the south end of the town of Oak Hill. A road comes in from the south at a 45 degree angle on the left, as U.S. 1 curves to the right, turn left to the entrance to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. Go south till you cross bridge. Soon as you cross bridge, a road on right will take you to the boat ramp.

Rods: 7-9 wt.

Lines: weight forward or intermediate.

Flies: Mullet Patterns, Chartreuse/BlueHead Seaducer with lead eyes, Gold

Spoons, Crab Patterns, Chartreuse Clousers.

If you need further information call Mike Head at 388-8590. Sign up at the FCFF March meeting, Monday, March 5.

Venice Bridge Lights Promise Some Very Nice Sized Snook

by *Dick Michaelson*

Jimmy Ricks was right. There are a lot of snook under the lights in the Venice and Englewood area. Jimmy and I went to Englewood last month to help casting instructor David Lambert with a casting class.

We did not leave until late on Saturday so that put us around Venice, FL, at about 12:10 a.m. Someone did not make any motel reservations so this ended up being a problem, but the fishing was good. Jimmy has been telling us about the snook fishing in this area for a long time. We stopped at the first bridge we passed over and sure enough, there they were, we could see 20 to 30 fish in the lighted area of the bridge pilings.

David and I got excited and wanted to fish. As luck would have it, on the other side of the bridge there was a place to park.

Just 50 feet from the truck was an opening in the mangrove and we were in the fishing hole. The lighted part of the bridge pilings was only a short cast from the bank. A small slot in the mangroves necessitated a high back cast to get the fly over the branches. All of those casting lessons really paid off. We took

one rod and took turns casting to snook. You could see the fish and watch them go after the fly. The tide was not running very hard so the fish were not real aggressive. We did manage to catch 6 fish in a range from 18 to 21 inches.

This was my first snook on a fly and they will put a tug on your line. We tried different flies but Jimmy said as long as it was white it would work.

We caught all six fish on a String Bean fly, tied on a #4 hook. Jimmy kept telling us that it was the best fly to use. About 2:30 AM we decided we needed to get some sleep.

To make a long story short we spent the night in Jimmy's suburban and the next morning was well, let just say we were not eager to teach an all-day fly fishing school.

If you want a good trip and some good fly fishing ask Jimmy he knows the area and can give you some information. I think an outing may be in order.

Catch-em and Release-em

Chasing Golden Salmon

Great Lodging, Lots of Dorado Make Argentina Trek A Backcountry Treasure

by *Charlie Heston*

John Bottko, Bob Minke, and I left in early January for the Pirayu Lodge in Argentina. We were fishing for the freshwater dorado, golden salmon.

Sheldon Bryant and his wife, Erin met us in Buenos Aires. Sheldon is from Jacksonville. They flew us north on a charter flight the final 400 to the lodge.

Pirayu Lodge is brand new, first-class, five-star operation which is located on 3,000 acres in the Northeast part of the Argentina. It has several owners, including the Careras family, who have three other successful lodges in country. Pirayu was built and managed by Butler Ball, also from Jacksonville, and his finance Hilton Hines. The Pirayu accommodates 10 guests in five double rooms with queen size beds, private baths, air conditioning, and a staff of 20.

The lodge is built on the edge of the Iberia Marshland, a 3-million acre wetland similar to the Everglades. It is at the head of the Corrientes River, which eventually ends up in Buenos Aires.

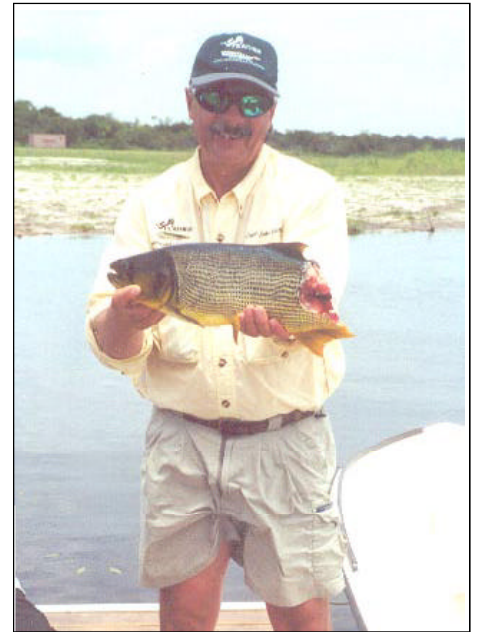
We fished from new Hell's Bay boats powered by 25-hp Yamahas. Normally, we fished two guests and a guide to a boat. Sometimes we fished one guest to a guide; one day I fished with two guides on an exploration trip.

On a typical day we ate breakfast at 7:30, left the dock at 9 a.m., fished til 12:30, then returned to the lodge for a swim in the pool, a lunch, and a siesta. By 4 p.m. we back in the boats and fished until dark. Back for the night, we cleaned up, had gourmet orders with juices, compared fishing stories, then dined at 9:30

Dorado are similar to salmon, but have a large mouth with sharp teeth. They make explosive strikes on the surface jump are very strong. We soon learned that tapered leader with conventional knots would not hold up to the fishes' power. We switched to straight 20-lb. leaders connected to wire shock tippet by



CHARLIE W/ BIG DORADO



JOHN W/DORADO PARTS

a doubled figure-eight knot and a snap swivel at the fly.

We used strong 2/0 hooks with large streamers or Clousers. even with this rig, hooks were sometimes smashed and bent closed.

Most fish we caught were in the three to seven pound range; both John and Bob caught 10-lb fish, and Sheldon caught one 15-pounder.

John hooked one fish that we guessed weighed eight pounds. Before he could land it, a much larger fish bit it in half. It was reported that the area breeds 30-lb. dorado, and the record is 70 pounds.

Northeast Argentina is hot this time of year. We dressed for it and drank plenty of water. With the temperatures reaching 95 in the shade, we used lots of sunscreen and it was not unbearable.

Wildlife in this part of the world is interesting. There are alligator (which the Argentinians call cayman), anaconda, carpinchos (a hog size rodent that lives in the marsh, and 150 species of birds. The nearest dwelling was on a ranch more than a mile away.

At night the only lights were from star and giant fireflies and the only sounds



CHARLIE W/ GUIDE

came from the birds, bugs, and beasts.

We spent seven days in the lodge and one night and a day sightseeing in Buenos Aires on the return trip.

If you're interested in visiting the Pirayu Lodge, contact John Bottko at the Salty Feather, 645-8998. He has another trip planned for February, 2002 where he expects to fill the lodge with a group of 10.



FCFF CREW FOR BOB CLOUSER S CLINIC

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SALE**

St. Croix Legend Series 8/9-wt. 9-ft. 2-piece \$100; New Redington SSF Saltwater Series 9ft. 9-wt. 2-piece \$200; New Redington SSF Saltwater Series 9-ft. 8-wt. 2-piece \$200; All Rods With Lifetime warranty, Contact Warren Hinrichs 384-0996; warrenspeace@aol.com

First Coast Fly Fisher

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