

First Coast Fly Fisher

June 2001

Jacksonville, Florida



Tripletail Here? You Bet!!

See page 7

COMING SOON

HIWASSEE RIVER TRIP JUNE
6-9

JUNE 14-18
PRESIDENT'S TRIP TO
SANDY POINT, ABACOS

JUNE 22-24
CANAVERAL SEASHORE
CAMPING/FISHING OUTING

JULY 21
BLACK CREEK OUTING

MEETING TIME AND DATE

SOUTHPOINT MARRIOTT
MONDAY, JUNE 4
CASTING PROGRAM 6 PM
MEETING 7 PM

SPEAKER

STEVE KANTNER
THE LAND CAPTAIN

TOPIC

WALK-IN FLY FISHING IN
SOUTH FLORIDA'S CANALS

PRESIDENT S FORUM

Good Fishing Arrives, Good Outings, Too

We've got some fine fishing for the next months. Now's the time to go out and get 'em. I've seen tarpon just outside the surf and in the backwaters. The cobia are starting to trickle in. How 'bout this: Tripletail lying suspended on the surface just off the beach around Jekyll Island and Sea Island, GA. I saw some BIG reds backing in late May and heard reports of blues, jacks, and spanish from many fly fishers.

Like I said: Go get 'em.

MAY'S MILL COVE OUTING

We saw some old faces and some new ones at late May's Mill Cove outing. **Doug Moore, Dick Michaelson**, and I fished the FCFF Jr. Members. **Bud Larsen** was there with his lovely bride **T.L.** **Mike Head** did a great job of organization, as usual. Other FCFFers we saw were **Daniel Benson, Dennis Jammes, Jody Ballard, Kendal Parks, Mike Bubia, John Manuel, Dick Choate, Lamar Drake, George Durrance**, and the kids, **Ryan, C.J.**, and **Kyle**. I'm sure there were others, but these were all I heard of by press time. Photos next month.

HIWASSEE RIVER TRIP

Contact Bud Larsen to sign up for *the Hiwassee River trout trip* June 6-9. This trout trip comes after the summer heat has set in and it's a great, refreshing way to get away and catch a few mountain trout with some great people. Wives and SOs are encouraged. Bud's number is 389-0055, or email him at <larsentl@excite.com>.

IN PRAISE OF INTERMEDIATE LINES

by David Lambert

Fly fishing in salt water presents us with an ever-changing set of challenges; there's the wind, seemingly always in force; there's currents and tides; there's water clarity, temperature, and differing depths.

It's these vagaries in fly fishing which make it interesting. But these same challenges tell us that it's time to change our floating-line-only mentality and employ other lines for specific purposes.

My favorite for around here is the intermediate line. I like the Orvis blue intermediate braided line, but Sci-Anglers, Cortland, and Rio, and Air-Flo all provide intermediates that are of good quality and reasonably priced. So you have your choice.

Intermediate lines are really 'slow sinking' lines. They have a specific gravity slightly denser than water and will gently slice through the surface film and slowly sink.

The slow-sink advantage of intermediates can't be praised enough. They allow your fly to ride just under the water's surface, or they can take a weighted fly down quicker and deeper than a floater.

I do a good bit of surf casting, since I live close to the ocean. I've found that an intermediate is the perfect line for that application for a couple of reasons.

First, a floating line rides high in the wave and water surface, which creates a lot of slack in the line. That's undesirable when you want to strike the fish or pick up to make another cast.

Riding high in the water also allows a floating line to be blown by wind and worked by currents, which becomes a pain when you're trying to control your line. An intermediate riding just below the surface stays closer to you (doesn't float down-current) and it becomes easier muster a cast.

Second, intermediates cut the air just like they cut water because they're generally smaller in diameter than floaters. That makes for good casting in windy conditions. Because they are slightly weighted, they provide a deeper load for the rod, which, when you groove the line, gets you a bit more distance and provides you with a distinct advantage over the wind.

Third, casting an intermediate usually is as easy as casting a floater, unless you've let it sink too far down. Even then a simple roll cast will bring the line up to the surface, then a slightly rounded cast will deliver the fly quickly and accurately.

If you don't own and use an intermediate line, you're not playing your best game.

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NEWSLETTER

David Lambert

FlyFishing Kids

They Learn And We Learn
At Gulf Shores Conclave

Fly Tyer s Corner *with*

Kevin Cohenour



Sometimes pictures do say a more than words. David Lambert and I presented the FlyFishing Kids program to a dozen kids in Gulf Shores, AL, in late May. Each kid learned to cast, rig, tie flies, and knots. By all accounts, it was a great success. This was our fifth year doing the program. And we had fun doing it!

TWO FOR COSTA RICA



Scott Sheridan's Costa Rican Tarpon Resulted In A Broken Rod

by Scott Sheridan

FCFFer Capt. Doug Moore and I departed Florida on May 3 for Costa Rica to spend four days fly fishing the Caribbean waters off the coast of southern Nicaragua. It was my third trip to Costa Rica in search of tarpon and big snook and Doug's first. Every other time the water was so muddy and rough from the rainy season that the fishing was very difficult.

Our guide was Peter Gorinsky, owner of Fly Fish Costa Rica. Peter, his brother Chris, and mate Brad Washburn of North Carolina met us at the airport in San Jose, CR. On arrival, we checked into a local hotel on the mountainside above San Jose with a spectacular view of the city and prepared for our trip north early the next morning.

We awakened early Friday for the two-hour drive through Puerto Viejo and down to the river edge to meet Tercio, Peter's boat keeper. We loaded our gear and food for the four-day expedition into Peter's 21-foot jonboat, "Tropic." Three hours after clearing immigration at the Nicaragua/Costa Rica border, we arrived at Graytown in the Rio San Juan region of southern Nicaragua. Our host was Melvin and we stayed at his hotel on the banks of the Rio Indio.

Graytown, as with many small, forgotten communities, has a story to tell. In the mid 1800s many people passed through the area on their migration from the east coast of America to the gold fields of California. At its height the city had a railroad, many hotels, and



Doug Moore In Nicaragua With Jungle Bream

a robust shipping business. What is now the Panama Canal originally was slated to begin at Graytown, pass through Lake Nicaragua, then on to the Pacific. The plan was scuttled over alleged political unrest and Panama was selected for the canal. The superstructure of a sunken dredge still points skyward some 50 feet to bear witness to this era of history.

Saltwater fishing the first two days was very slow; however, the freshwater fishing on Indian Creek and a nearby lake proved rewarding. We were able to land guapote, mojarra, and machaca. The guapote has the coloration of a small mouth bass, the mouth of a snook, and the back end of a tripletail. It can destroy a foam or cork popper. The mochaca looks like a very large golden shiner, while the mojarra looks like a cross between a sheepshead and a very large bream. Doug classified them all as 'jungle bream.' Each species has very sharp teeth and is so aggressive one would think they were on steroids.

We fished the ocean in the early hours each day, looking for tarpon, jacks, or snook. By Saturday evening, with minimal sightings of tarpon, I wondered if this trip would be like the rest—close but no cigar. The next morning we found a couple of shrimp trawlers about a mile off the coast. With them were tarpon by the dozen and some big jacks. All fed on the stunned fish the shrimpers turned up.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

COSTA RICA FOR TWO

(Continued from previous page)

Quickly we tied on white flies and cast to feeding tarpon, trying to avoid the jacks for the time being. We had four hook-ups to no avail. These were large fish, many up to 100 pounds. They were able to find all weakness in our rigs, or just simply threw the hook.

Brad hooked a 16-pound jack and quickly had it in the boat. At last, Doug hooked up a "silver king" and hung on for the acrobatics. Peter urged me to continue casting to the other tarpon off the back of the boat. Twenty minutes into Doug's fight I hooked up on another 80-pounder. Again the acrobatics started.

What a rush! I now know why some anglers do nothing but chase tarpon. After 45 minutes of jumping and sounding we got my tarpon along side the boat and ready to release. Just as Peter reached to gaff the fish my 12-wt. rod exploded into a dozen pieces. In my efforts to lead the fish to Peter I had "high stuck" the rod, putting pressure on it beyond its limit.

The fish swam aft and we were able to hand release the fish on the port side.

Meanwhile Doug was having it out with his fish, not sure who was going to win. Late into the fight, only ten minutes before landing the fish, the tarpon mustered the strength to jump a full body length out of the water.

What remarkable creatures these large tarpon were, and they were not even 100 pounders. We released in good shape, but the other fish were long gone. None of us would admit it, but secretly we were not sure we wanted to take on another fight quite yet, and we returned to Graytown for a late breakfast. We went back later in the morning to no avail, and decided to fish the fresh water lakes and rivers.

Although the freshwater variety is challenging on light tackle (5 wt. fly rods), we were eager to cast to more tarpon. On Monday evening, our last day of fishing, just before sundown, we heard huge fish feeding around the edge of the lake. Tarpon had entered the lake from the Rio San Juan. We thought we had a good chance to hook up again, but Doug made a dozen casts to three different fish. We found no takers and we returned to the hotel for dinner and our return trip home.

On our trip out the Rio San Juan, the water was so low that we had to drag the boat over a half-dozen sand bars. Peter was concerned that we may not make our connection in San Jose for the flight home. The decision was made to travel south by sea and enter Costa Rica at Bara Colorado, where we would catch a twin-engine bush plane back to San Jose. The decision proved to be a good one. Doug and I made a safe trip home. Peter later informing me by e-mail that he and Brad spent three hours digging "Tropic" off a sand bar in the south fork of the Rio San Juan.

Now home with memories and photos, Doug and I both look forward to our next expedition in search of the Silver King. (Note: Contact Peter Gorinsky and Fly Fish Costa Rica at his website, www.flyfishcostarica.com.)



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OUTINGS, TRIPS, AND EXPEDITIONS



FCFFER JAMES HARRINGTON TOOK THIS FINE BRACE OF BROWN AND RAINBOW TROUT IN THE APPALACHIANS LAST MONTH.

Hiwassee Trout Trip Is Great Way To Bring In The Summer

by *Bud Larsen*

This year FCFF will again trek to Reliance, TN to fish the beautiful Hiwassee River. We will make the trip June 6-9.

The Hiwassee tailwater is judged to be one of Americas 100 best trout streams by Trout Unlimited. 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

The Hiwassee has an excellent insect population, so your chances are good for afternoon dry fly action, using a 4 or 5 wt, and streamers or nymphs, on a 6 wt, between hatches. 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.

Numerous freestone trout streams exist in nearby Cherokee National Forest and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park if you want to extend your trip.

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



HURRICANE
FLOYD
NASA PHOTO

**BRING A FLY TO
THE MONTHLY FLY
AUCTION. YOU
MIGHT WIN A
POCKETFUL OF FLIES**

Back To School: Jekyll Island Tripletail

by David Lambert

Some days start off strange, then get more interesting. Take one day last week, for instance.

The day started clear and calm, with no early morning breeze. The ocean was smooth as a balloons and the water was clear. I know this because I looked at it wistfully just before I began helping my youngest son cram for a sixth grade math final (which, by the way, was over my head).

I was helping Geoff convert inverted fractions when I got an early call from Larry Crews, a charter captain in Jekyll Island, GA. Larry said the tripletail were in and could I come up now to fish them.

Since fly fishing for tripletail is less difficult than converting compound fractions, I opted for fish and called Doug Moore to join me. Doug can avoid the dairy business on occasion, and we made the hour and a half trip.

Capt. Larry met us at the dock and we sped off to catch the tide. After about 45 minutes of scouting the south shore of Jekyll Island we saw our first of 20 or so tripletail laying sideways on the surface. These fish were around no cover and there was no structure anywhere. The bottom showed flat and smooth at 5-7 feet in depth. They ranged in size from three pounds to 30+ pounds.

Spotting them in the water is rather like looking for white flotsam; they lie fully exposed and their scales reflect a white shimmer that makes you think they are in fact white, not the sooty gray color you get when you land them.

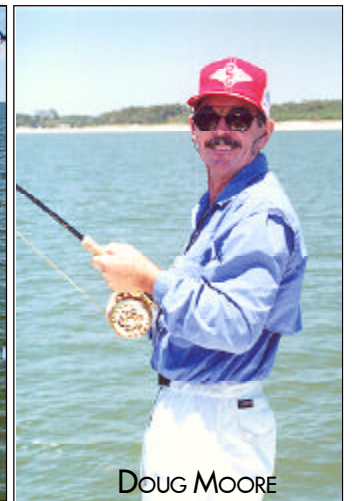
Doug cast three times to a good sized one before he got the fish's attention; it took with a visual splash. Fifteen minutes later he boated a 14-pound tripletail, his first. Good looking fish, too. We got shots at another six of them, but they were spooky and submerged as our boat approached. An hour later the wind kicked up and the water turned from the color of an old coke bottle to the murkiness of morning mocha.

A half an hour later we were having lunch in a awning-covered restaurant in the marina called Sea Jay's.

Doug's tripletail took a fly that looks like Clouser's bastard brother, with hackles on the side, about 4-5 inches long and stacked bottom to top with bucktail in white, then red with 10 strands of tiny silver Flashabou, then chartreuse, with yellow/black lead eyes. Doug calls it the 'Milk-Um' fly, after his boat is the 'Milk-Um.' Actually the fly is very effective. He's taken all makes and models on it, including tarpon in Nicaragua last month.

Doug and I took a good look at this fish on the filet table. They've got smallish sharp teeth and gills that remind me of a serrated cake knife. Although Larry said the fish he'd cut recently were chock full of pogies, this one's stomach contained no goodies, which may be the reason he readily took the fly. This fish produced filets which weighed 4.5 pounds each. Since neither of us had eaten tripletail, we were anxious to sample its reputed excellent flavor. (I grilled mine two days later and it is superb.)

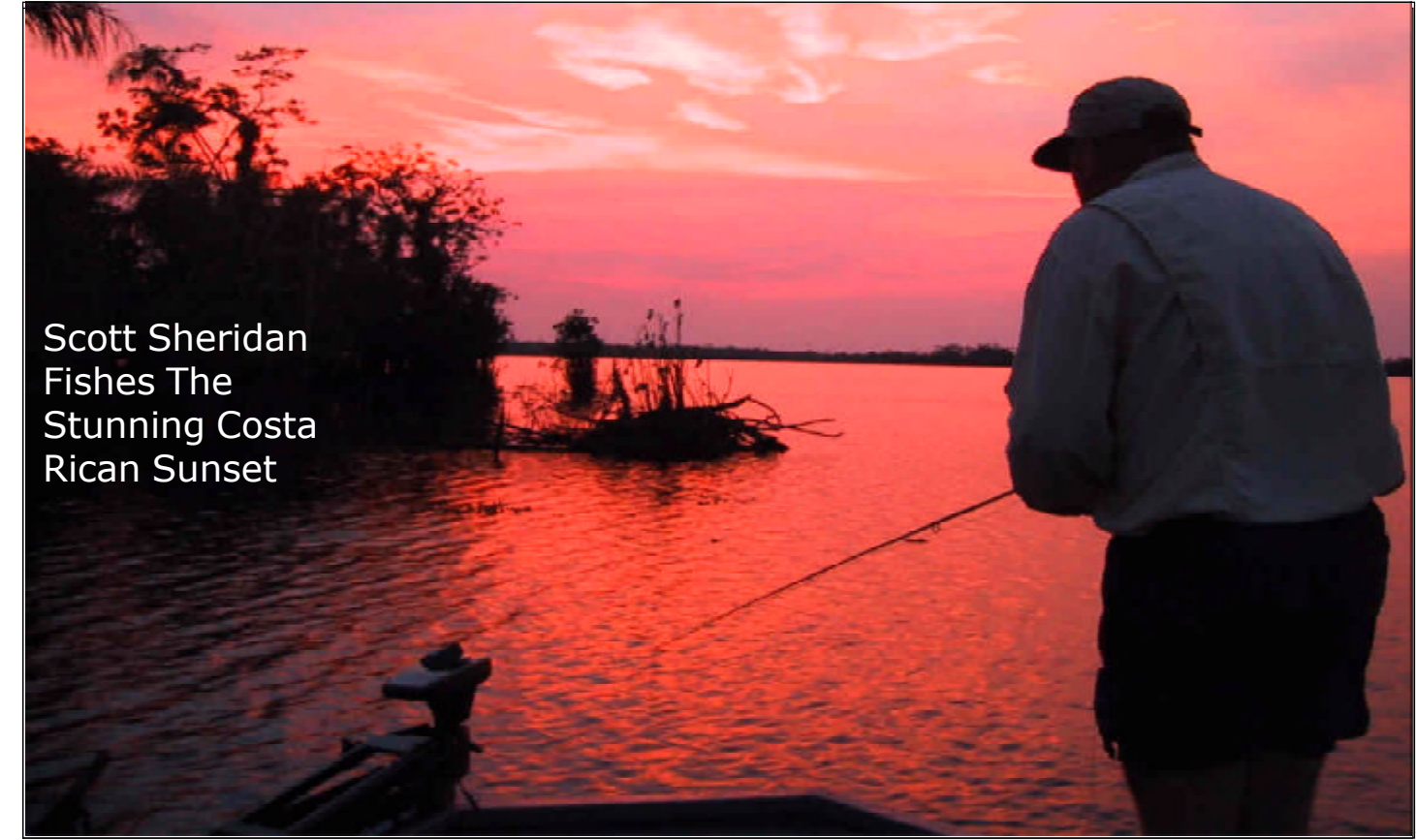
Also of note that strange day: On our way out an odd bird angled across our path that none of us had ever seen. It was



TEXTBOOK
TRIPLETAIL
FIRST YOU FIND
THE FISH (TOP),
THEN YOU GET IT
TO TAKE A FLY
(C-L), THEN YOU
SMILE (C-R), THEN
YOU POSE WITH
THE CAPTAIN.

a big bird, greyish in color, with a large wingspan and straight bill. We were at a loss. Then, as we were running full tilt, a five-foot spotted eagle ray leapt twice, just like he was coming in the boat. Both Doug and I explored the edges of the gunwales. Larry thought it was funny as heck, but then he was hidden behind a windshield. Never seen that at close range, either.

Capt. Larry Crews is an artist and sculptor and an off-shore, nearshore, and inshore guide. He charts out of Jekyll Island Marina. Larry says the tripletail are part of Jekyll/Sea Island fishery May through July, maybe August, depending on the weather. Larry's contact information is: 912/265-7529h, 912/222-0697c; email fishtrip@thebest.net; internet page, offshore-charters.com



Scott Sheridan
Fishes The
Stunning Costa
Rican Sunset

FOR SALE

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Boat/Motor/Trailer -- 1998 Pathfinder, Tunnel Hull, 16' 10" length, 60HP Yamaha, Great White bow mount (removable) trolling motor, poling platform, live well, Eagle depth finder with temperature gauge, seats with backs, trim tabs, custom cover, aluminum drive-on trailer. Runs very shallow. Kept clean and covered. Ready to fish! \$9,000. Contact Donn McKinnon 904 777-3649 home, 542-3142work or donnmck@worldnet.att.net

15' Mitzi Skiff, Ready to fish. 40 hp oil injected Tohatsu w/ tilt and trim, hydraulic jack plate and trim tabs. Electronics include Hummingbird fish/depth finder, VHF radio. Included: 18' Moonlighter push pole, a Great White trolling motor with removable brackets. Built in gas tank and level indicator, extreme cooler and custom seat cushion. Gator trailer has just been rewired. Boat has been stored indoors. A bargain considering the options and condition at \$8,000. For more information call Scott Sheridan, 904/234-4515 or Trip McEuen, 904/777-3600.

Fly Rod--Loomis GL3 6 wt, 2 pc. \$195. Call Randy Lanier, 645-8998.

Fly Rod--Orvis Silver Label 12-wt. Tarpon Rod, 2 pc, never used, \$170. Call David Lambert, 249-2075.

First Coast Fly Fisher

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