

First Coast Fly Fisher

December 2004

www.fcff.org

Jacksonville, FL



Top Caster, World Traveling Fly Fisher Jon Cave Will Speak At Year-end Banquet

The FCFF Officers and Board announced that they will bring in top fly casting instructor and internationally recognized fly fisherman Jon Cave to speak at the year-end banquet, to be held this year at the UNF Conference Center, Feb.19.

Jon is a writer, photographer, and fly casting columnist. He has a masters degree in Marine Science and is a licensed guide.

MEETING TIME & PLACE

SOUTHPOINT MARRIOTT

MONDAY, DEC 6

SPEAKER: DR. JIM

**MCCULLY ON TIDES AND
SEATROUT**

FLY TYING - 5:45 PM.

**BRING YOUR TOOLS AND TIE W/
SALTWATER FLYTYERS · DON REED**

MEETING STARTS 7 PM

NC Waters -- A Photo From FCFF
Photographer and Flyfisher Rick
Palazzini. See Page 5 For More
Palazzini Photos



www.blackcreekoutfitters.com
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(904) 645-7003 • Fax: (904) 645-9727

COMING SOON

Sat., Dec. 4, 2004- Cumberland Island Trout-- Jim McCully and Don Butler host this annual seatrout expedition to beautiful Cumberland Island, GA. We will camp at Crooked River State Park where there are cabins available for rent as well.

January 22, 2005 - Port St Johns Power Plants Join Us for Ladyfish, jacks, seatrout, and small tarpon often hang out when power generation is heavy. Redfish schools., too.

Thank You Letter From Carol (Mrs. Ray) Waters

October 30, 2004

Dear Friends:

How can I adequately express my thanks to you for all you have done in honor of Ray and to help me since his death October 16th?

The past two weeks have been a haze of disbelief and grief. One Saturday Ray went fishing and my life changed forever. More than once I was told, "He was a lucky man. He died doing what he loved."

And, Ray loved First Coast Fly Fishers. Often we talked about how blessed we were to have such a wonderful group we could call friends.

Thank you for your phone calls, prayers, offers of help, kind words at the services, and the support you have given me.

Many of you helped in selfless ways to see that I was spared problems. From returning the boat and truck, identifying the body, searching for his hat, leading the services, telling stories, locating pictures, writing and printing the photo tribute, and being with me and his family to say good-bye. They were acts of love and tribute to Ray I shall never forget.

My deepest gratitude to each of you.

Fondly, Carol

(Mrs. Ray Waters)

Congratulations to the newly 2005 elected FCFF Officers and Board of Directors:

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Vice President for Programs: Joe Joseph

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Secretary Greg Durrance

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Librarian: Dick Clarke

Information/Education: Jim McCully

Membership: David Kudley

Banquet: Homer Bliss

At Large: Scott Campbell, Dennis Dahlquist

Officers and Directors of First Coast Fly Fishers

PRESIDENT

George Durrance
241-5697

grdrbgay@bellsouth.com

VP PROGRAMS

Mike McQuiston
904/826-3735

topandtobe@aol.com

VP OUTINGS

Mike Head
388-8590h; 268-6888w

flytier326@aol.com

TREASURER

Sherrie Froehlich
904/460-0203h; 904/814-2892c
sfroehlich@bestnetpc.com

SECRETARY

Scott Campbell
287-6886h; 260-9666w
sdcampbell@newyorklife.com

LIBRARIAN

Greg Durrance
904/268-6363h; 353-5697w

INFORMATION/EDUCATION

Jim McCully
904/261-2215h

arionm@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP

Chan Ritchie
880-6396h; 502-7600c
[critchie@watsonrealtycorp](mailto:critchiewatsonrealtycorp)

AT LARGE

Dick Clark
396-5084h; 396-7072w
clarkowitz@aol.com

Joe Josephs
292-1376h; 633-5905w
jjosephs@fccj.edu

BANQUET

Julie Marshall
241-2854h; 744-5744w
hmfishbox@aol.com

PAST PRESIDENT

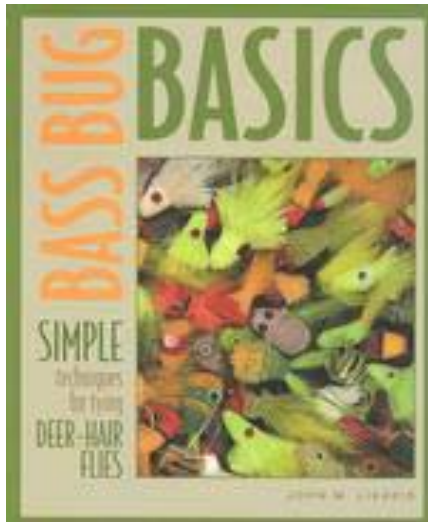
Dick Choate
223-1571h; 234-7985c
dickchoate@aol.com

Bass Bug Basics

An Essential Primer for Tying With Deer Hair

By John M Likakis, Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 86 pages, softbound, illustrated, Black & White , \$12.95

Reviewed by Bruce E. Harang



Most fly tyers consider spinning deer hair beyond their abilities, believing it to be extremely difficult to master. Now comes the author with a slim volume to not only explode this myth of difficulty but to provide the fly tyer with all of the tools to excel at this form of fly tying.

This well written book contains six short chapters, each explaining one section of tying bass bugs. Chapter one details the tools you need, how to choose hair for spinning and stacking and two straight-forward and practical methods of spinning deer hair on a hook. It ends with the tyer tying his first successful spun deer hair bug.

Chapter two teaches multi-color bugs, how to fix a bug gone wrong

by a slip of the razor blade shaping the spun hair into a chosen form, stacking hair on a hook and onto spun hair, threads for stacking hair, and concludes with tying instructions for three very popular styles of bass bugs. The following chapters cover bass bug tails, heads on bugs, types and methods for adding legs to bugs, and special effects such as mixing hair of different colors before spinning it onto a hook, using paint and markers, making eye holes, scaling up the bugs size for use with larger fish such as pike and musky, and building the bass bug sideways on the hook to keep the hook gap free to hook the fish.

Each chapter concludes with detailed instructions on how to tie at least one popular style of bass bug. The book concludes with a list of suppliers of bass bug tools and materials and an index.

The writing is clear and easy to read. The editing is excellent. The step-by-step instructions are also well done and easy to read and follow. However, the photographs

used are average at best and a real disappointment coming from a high quality publisher such as this. While the reader will be able to understand the subject of most of the photos because of the well-written text, they themselves are not well done. Hopefully, this one shortcoming will be corrected in the next edition of this wonderful book.

This is undoubtedly the best available book on tying deer hair bugs. With the tools so well presented, the tyer cannot help but succeed handsomely in learning to tie good looking, durable, fish catching, and fisherman catching bugs for bass, panfish, pike, and any other fish that eats large sized food items. At the asking price, the information in this book is definitely undervalued, making it a great bargain as well as a great teaching aid.

Ed. Note: John M. Likakis is the former editor of Warmwater Fly Fishing and American Angler magazines, and has contributed hundreds of articles to fishing magazines ranging from American Angler to Florida Sportsman. He lives in Bennington, Vermont.



The Elusive Tick

When Your Line Hits The Ground From Gravity Or Gusto

by Gordon Hill

Ticking the ground behind the caster is an elusive fault. The caster can't really see or hear it. It can rob power and control from the forward cast. Often an observer can identify the tick, but not always its cause.

Last year, while trying to sharpen my distance casting skills, I thought I was doing really well. My distance had increased and was easier to achieve. When I began to carry a bit more line out of the rod tip, my cast began to occasionally falter enough to make me aware that I'd developed a fault. Try as I did, I couldn't figure what the problem might be. I

carefully watched and was pleased with my backcast, and my forward stroke seemed unchanged.

Tom White critiqued my cast and said, "You are ticking the grass behind you."

Now this is a fault we've all observed, on occasion, with our students. It had been, for me, easy to see....and not easy to cure until I could get the caster to elevate the back cast enough to prevent it. Here, however, I could look back and note what seemed to me to be a good back cast; high, with a tight loop. A fine setup for the forward stroke. On the next forward stroke, Tom noted that I ticked again. Evening visibility was getting to be a problem, so we stopped casting

without a real solution.

In the morning, I set out to solve this dilemma. The only way I could really see what was happening, was to watch my backcast, and continue to remain turned long enough to see what was going on behind me while starting my forward stroke. I noted that I was waiting just a bit too long after the backcast loop unfurled when carrying the increased length of line. The line started to fall just enough that the fly had started to settle toward the grass. As I began the forward stroke, the initial loading move felt good, but it resulted in the fly continuing on enough of a downward and forward trajectory that it ticked the grass.

All I had to do was to change my timing a tiny bit. This resulted in starting my forward stroke exactly as the backcast loop was straightened. To prove the point to myself, I purposely made it worse by exaggerating the fault. I ticked every time. By backing off from that exaggerated timing fault, I was able to train myself to avoid it completely.

I have since studied this by watching other casters who sometimes tick. I learned that this is only one method of doing it. Another is to combine poor timing with an open loop cast, and to compound the problem by making that backcast too low.

Then I decided to learn to duplicate the move on the forward cast, where it was easy to see. I got to where I could do so, and produce a tick every time. I now use that method as a teaching tool. The caster can see it, since it's out in front, and once learned can back off from the fault which produced it and better understand what is going on in the backcast.

(Ed. Note: Gordie Hill is a new member of the Federation of Fly Fishers Casting Board of Governors. He lives in Big Pine Key, Florida)

**Cedar
Point,
Early
Morn
Flood
Tide**



photo by
Rick
Palazzini

The Traveling Flyfisher

New Zealand Lake Fishing

by Dana Griffin, III

On a recent trip to New Zealand I managed to get in a couple of days of fly fishing, an experience that broadened considerably my concept of the sport.

At Lake Rotorua, a caldera lake on the north island, the boat skipper taught me the technique of "hauling," the Kiwi approach to hooking the lake's feisty trout. The trout are rainbows whose ancestors swam in the American and Feather rivers of California. California rainbows were introduced into New Zealand back in the 19th century, so subsequent generations have had ample time to adapt to local conditions. Hauling would likely be called drift fishing or slow trolling in North America.

The rigging for this type of fishing is worth a brief description since it represents years of fine tuning by local lake fishermen in this remote part of the world, and who's to say it might not work here closer to home. The 12-15 foot leader was tipped by a weighted piece of plastic (called a Tasmanian Devil) that looks something like a spoon.

The devil helps to sink the flies to the proper depth and also prevents excessive twisting of the leader and flies. At 2 foot intervals along the leader streamers were attached. We fished 3 of these flies on a single rig.

The leader was knotted to a braided line that was color coded, that is every 10 feet or so of line was dyed a different color. This enables the angler to know approximately how much line is off the spool (getting the flies to the right depth is critical on this lake). If a light wind is blowing in the right direction, engines are shut down and boats simply drift downwind, trolling lines to the upwind side of the hull.

On the days I went out no wind was blowing so we used engine power to troll at a slow speed. This kept the streamers working over likely water. As to the patterns used, I can say New Zealand flies vary from those that are virtually exact copies of patterns we used here at home to others that are rather endemic to the islands

My host fixed me up with a Hamill's Killer, a laterally flattened fly dressed with dyed wood duck or mallard flank feathers (the Hamill's Killer represents either a dragonfly larva or crayfish or bully which is a kind of sculpin), a Hairy Dog dressed with a black chenille body and which supposedly imitates a bully and finally a smelt pattern finished out with a pearlescent chenille body topped by some badger hackles tied in matuka style. The smelt pattern represents *Retropinna*, a local bait fish.

The two trout I managed to boat, one a slender spawned out female of about 2 pounds, the second a hefty 5 pounder that broke off at the side of the boat, both struck on the smelt fly. The heavier of the two fish really put a bend in the 10 foot fiber glass rod I was given to use. Another angler on board was fishing with a similar rod. These rods looked to have some age on them (the chewed up cork handles was one indication.) I asked their owner if he'd ever considered moving on to one of the modern graphite sticks. His response? "Don't really have much use for 'em. These fiber glass darlings have been catching me supper for going on 35 years now. Why would I want to change?" I found it convenient to drop the subject. After all, he had invited me onto his boat free of charge.

If you're planning a visit to New Zealand and would like a go with Lake Rotorua's trout, get in touch with the Waiteti Lakeside Lodge. You can find their website at www.waitetilodge.co.nz.



A Tasmanian Devil

Please Support These Contributing Guides, Instructors, and Fly Shops

Capt David Borries, 708-8915; captdavidborees@aol.com

Capt John Bottko, 645-8998
feather2@ix.netcom.com

Capt Warren Hinrichs
www.warrenhinrichs.com
384-0996

Instr. David Lambert
d.lambert@onwatermedia.com
241-4163

Capt Randy Lanier,
384-4187h; 645-8998
feather2@ix.netcom.com

Capt Larry Miniard
285-7003

captlmin@bellsouth.net

Capt Doug Moore, 757-3323;
545-0602 Cell
mmdairy@aol.com

Capt Steve Moore, 904-824-2621h; 540-6305cell

Capt. Mike McQuiston
(904) 826-3735
topandtope@aol.com

Capt. Chip Owen, 904-797-4007; 904-377-1115,cell
chip007@bellsouth.net

Instr. Don Reed
donreed@saltwaterflytyers.com
904/535-6929

Capt. Russell Tharin, 904-491-4799 h; 825-7982,cell
captrt@bellsouth.net

Avid Angler
2101 N Ponce de Leon Ave
St. Augustine, FL 32084
904-824-8322

Salty Feather
ST JOHNS BLUFF RD, JACKSONVILLE,
FL 904-645-8998

Fall , Au Sable River, Michigan



photo by Rick Palazzini

First Coast Fly Fishers
P.O. Box 16260,
Jacksonville, FL
32245-6260