

First Coast Fly Fisher

Sept/ October 2004

www.fcff.org

Jacksonville, FL



Big Fish For A Young Fly Fisher -- Longtime FCFFer Capt. Larry Miniard put father/son clients on a school of these bruiser jacks close to the beach last month. The pair had a double hook-up and lost a couple big jacks.

October Meeting

Monday, October 4
Southpoint Marriott,
1-95 & Salisbury Road
Speaker:

Cpts. Tic Smith &
George Beasley
Fishing GA's Big
Northern Rivers
Casting - 5:45 p.m.
Meeting - 7 p.m.

Coming Soon

Mon., Oct. 4- FCFF Meeting.
Cpts. Tic Smith and George
Beasley on N GA's Big-River Trout.
Sat. Oct. 16 - Cedar Point Grass
Fishing Outing/Clinic with Bob
Clouser. See Page 4 For Info
Sun., Oct. 17 - Free Bob Clouser
Clinic. Full Day at M & M Dairy.
Bring Rods and Tying Tools
Mon., Nov. 8 - FCFF Meeting. Capt.
John Kumiski, Fishing Florida's
Space Coast

Bob Clouser Clinics

Free for Members

Oct. 16 & 17

See Pg. 4 For Info



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Reflections of a Fly Fisher

U-BOATING FOR TROUT

by Dana Griffin III

Recently, I had the opportunity to cast to serious sized rainbow trout from a U-boat. That's a high tech, canvas covered inner tube. (No, I wouldn't try this in Florida. Flipped feet, flailing about, could easily be misconstrued by a gator as struggling lunch.)



Author with a Colorado rainbow trout caught on an Orange Blossom Special

The place was a lake on a ranch outside of Loveland, Colorado, far from gator country. My son had set this up, a day of trout fishing – U-boats, guide, even a bracing shore lunch.

It was quite an adventure. As we were arriving at lakeside, Wilbur, our guide, pointed toward the water. "Look at those rises! There must be a hatch coming off." We saw the dimpled water but couldn't make out what the fish were taking.

This little mystery soon resolved itself once we had launched ourselves (caution to reader: the launching of a flipped angler in a float tube is not a pretty sight.) The bugs were Callibaetis mayflies, a common lake fly that goes through one hatch after another so long as the water is ice free. These looked to be about a size 16.

"So, Wilbur," I inquired, "you got something to match this bug?" "I do," he replied, "but I wouldn't recommend it." "Why not?" I asked. "It's because we're late in the game. If we had been here at dawn, a Callibaetis imitation might have produced a strike or two, but this hatch is about to end. The fish are going to be moving onto something else."

This, I thought, has got to be where Wilbur earns his fee. Had it been up to me, I'd have searched my fly box for a facsimile of the insects we saw floating all around us. "Okay, what do we start with?"

Wilbur's suggestion was about as far removed from a size 16 mayfly as one could reasonably get. "Let's try an orange blossom special," he said. The fly he produced from his vest pocket box looked like a cross between a woolly worm and a Tom Nixon Cajun Mickey Finn (author's note: this fly will be described in detail in a follow up article). It was dressed on a mammoth size 8 streamer hook.

"What in heaven's name does this thing imitate?" I asked. Wilbur drifted a bit in this reply. Not entirely sure, I heard him say, maybe the fry of a brown trout. No, as far as he knew, there were no browns in the lake we had chosen for the day.

"What did you think of those fish pictures down at the shop?" Wilbur wanted to know. He was referring to The Angler's Roost, fly fishing headquarters in Loveland, where our day had started. The pictures, gathered into a 3 ring notebook, showed clients holding hefty rainbows and grinning at the camera.

"It looked to me like those grins were about as broad as the fish were long," I

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Fly Tyer's Corner

The Orange Blossam Special

by Dana Griffin III

The Orange Blossam Special (OSB) is a fly that, while originating in the Rocky Mountain West, has application anywhere game fish pursue small minnows or fry of other game fish. And in a bit of behavior that might put Darwinians to a real test, the parents of some game fish have been known to eat their own offspring!

My introduction to this fly occurred on a day in early July in the Colorado Rockies when my son and I discovered the appeal the OBS has for hungry trout. I can hardly wait to try this pattern on our local fish. While the copies we used on that July day were size 8, there is no reason smaller (or larger) models could not be dressed and presented to likely quarry. Here are some dressing details:

Hook: 9672 or other 3X streamer hook, size 10-6

Thread: 6/0 black

Weight: gold cone head

Body: sparkle chenille, brown, olive or dark red

Tail: rooster neck hackles (2 brown badgers plus 1 orange & 1 yellow hackle)

Rib: copper wire, fine

Hackle: yellow or orange saddle hackle

Most of the materials incorporated into this pattern are tied in the normal (*i.e.*, traditional) way. The 4 tail hackles are lashed on matuka style. This will require first measuring the hackles for the proper length, trimming from the butt ends if the feathers are too long for the hook size being used.

Next, align the hackles so that the two brown badgers are on the outside, the yellow and orange hackles on the inside. Immersing the hackles in water (or beer, rye whisky or coffee, depending on what kind of liquid you have handy where you tie your flies) will greatly improve your ability to manage 4 feathers at the same time.

Anchor the butt end of the feathers at the front end of the chenille body (typically a bit behind the cone head), leaving room for the saddle hackle to be tied in. Gather the feathers closely together and stroke the barbels "against the grain," *i.e.*, toward the butt ends of the quills. Ideally, the barbels will stand upright, allowing you to secure the four hackles with the copper wire rib but avoiding trapping the barbels under the wire.

Advance the wire in open turns until the rib is at the front end of the chenille body. Take several thread wraps around the wire and then tease the wire until it parts. In this way no rough end is left that could later cut a tippet.

Finally, tie in the saddle hackle, wrap 3 or 4 times around the shank, and tie off. Take a whip finish knot immediately behind the cone head. Carefully apply a bit of head cement to the thread wraps, avoiding the saddle hackle. Once the head cement is dry this fly is ready to use.

What kind of water you cast it into and what kind of fish you present it to is to a large degree up to you. Good luck!

U-BOATING FOR TROUT *Continued from page 2*

observed. "Well," guide Wilbur remarked, "those trout were all caught in this lake on orange blossom specials!" We went slack jawed.

"Nuf said," son remarked. "Give me one of those flies and let's get to fishing." And so we did. We suffered through several strikes and lost fish before we adjusted the slack in our lines (there's a learning curve casting from an inner tube). Finally, I got a nice hook up. The trout made a strong initial run, boring for the bottom, but then she turned and headed

for the Colorado blue sky, breaking water in a beautiful jump. At the proper time, Wilbur used his boat net to help me secure the fish, a remarkably heavy 19" female.

This was a terrific introduction to fly fishing from a float tube, one I'd like to repeat and soon. If you're in the Loveland area and have a hankering to fly fish from a U-boat, give The Angler's Roost a call — Angler's Roost Fly Fishing Company (970-337-3785) or www.anglers-roost.com.



FCFF Presents

SATURDAY & SUNDAY

OCTOBER 16 & 17

Two *Free* Days With

Bob Clouser

Saturday's Schedule

FISH, OYSTER ROAST & CLINIC

Details -- FCFFers meet at 8 a.m. with Bob Clouser and Doug Moore at the Cedar Point ramp. High tide is at 10:45 am. This is a very high tide -- 5.95. Get there early because the tide will likely flood quickly. After fishing, meet at M & M Dairy around 2:30pm for a clinic, then later, oysters and beverages. Come straight from the ramp or go home and change, then come back.

Sunday's Schedule

FREE FULL-DAY CASTING & TYING CLINIC

Details -- Meet at 8:30 a.m at M&M Dairy for coffee and donuts. Bob Clouser starts his clinics at 9 am. This is a casting and tying day, so bring rods, vices, and tying tools. FCFF will provide lunch, drinks, and the good time.

Questions? Call Doug Moore at 545-0602.

The Positive Stop

by Jim Green

The various techniques of flycasting are all necessary for successful results, but the most important part is what I call a positive stop.

The expertise of flycasters can be judged by the way they execute this positive stop. It is this stop that forms the correct narrow line loop and makes the line roll rearward on the back cast and forward on the forward cast.

Without a good positive stop a person cannot become an expert caster. Putting something in motion and then suddenly stopping this movement is not what we often do in everyday life. Having no previous muscle memory of this stop makes it difficult to learn. Teaching a person to cast would be a piece of cake if the beginner could learn the positive stop quickly.

The best way I have found to teach this stop is to have the beginner go through the casting stroke repeatedly as if they were false casting without a line on the rod. Hold the rod with the wrist slightly bent back from the forearm and place the hand about three inches below the shoulder top. The forearm and biceps will form about a 90 degree angle. This is the beginning position to start the back cast when false casting. Do not bend the wrist or the elbow. Lift the hand, wrist, forearm and biceps as a unit upwards by rotating the shoulder joint. The rod will travel up a casting stroke path of 45 degrees, until it is stopped close alongside the eye. The forearm will assume a vertical position. When the rod hand reaches the eye make a positive stop by tightening the muscles of the shoulder, biceps, forearm, wrist and hand. Stop all arm movement and this will stop the rod handle. The butt part of the rod above the handle being the stiffest will stop next. The stop will progressively move up the rod. The tip being the most limber part of the rod will be forced to unload rearward very fast. If a line were on the rod a fast narrow rolling loop would be formed. The line always follows the movement of the rod tip top. The faster the tip top moves so goes the line.

The beginner should repeatedly make this back cast stroke until the rod tip is forced rearward this positive stop must be learned.

After a good stop has been accomplished forcing the rod tip to roll the imaginary line and leader so they almost straighten behind start the forward cast. Move the arm unit downward by rotating the shoulder joint and return to the same position of the beginning of the back cast stroke. Again, tighten all the muscles of the arm unit and make the rod butt handle come to the positive stop.

The rod will be forced to unload. Loading the rod is really automatic. When the rod is moved, the line weight will bend the rod. As you accelerate the movement, the rod will bend or load more.

The tricky part is to unload the rod. It is the correct positive stop that unloads the rod and forms the fast rolling narrow loop.

Repeat this dry run exercise until a good positive stop is made on both the back and forward cast. This stop has been called various names. Flipping the tip, power snap, whomping the rod, and I'm sure there may be more. Call it what you wish, but the caster must make a positive stop. It is the secret of flycasting.

Ed Note: Jim Green is known throughout the fly fishing industry as a creative rod designer and inventor. He and Sage founder Don Green have pioneered new rod designs and materials since the early 1950s.

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Notable Fish -- Clockwise from top left, **Matthew Perez** with a trip-maker snook caught with by Capt. Marcia Foosaner. **Dick Michaelson** with a redfish caught the day before hurricane Charley. **Ed Billing's** huge brown trout caught July on a 1-weight in Austria. **Chan Ritchie's** first sheepshead, taken on a Fiddler-In-the-Grass variant at Simpson's Creek this month.



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