

First Coast Fly Fisher

April 2005

www.fcff.org

Jacksonville, FL

Hinrichs Takes 1st runner Up In Del Brown for 2nd Year

See. Page 5 for details



MEETING & SPEAKER

Mon., April 3, 7 p.m. at Southpoint Marriot. **Speaker: Janet Zimmerman, Director of GTM Preserve.** **Topic:** Come Learn About The Fish and Fishing at The Newly established Guano Matanzas Tolomato Preserve. **Casting w/David Lambert and Dick Michaelson** at 6 p.m.

COMING EVENTS

April 23 - Mosquito Lagoon redfish and seatrout- This is a unique opportunity to learn about a very diverse fishery just south of us.

May 21 - St Johns River bass and bream - John Adams and Bill Lott host this great outing on the St Johns river.

June 5-7 -- Annual Hiwassee Float Trip For Trout. Call Bud Larsen for more information.

June 10-12 - Port St Lucie Snook -This is another great trip. We will spend the weekend with Capt.Marsha Foosaner. Reservations must be made early at the Caribbean Shores. Their phone number is (772) 334-4759. They fill up early so call NOW.

Note Date Change July 9 & 10 -- Outing To Tomoka State Park near Ormond Beach. Fish the Tomoka River for Redfish, Snook and Trout.

FCFF Truly Means Finest Kind



FCFFers Dick Choate, Chan Ritchie, Jim McCully, Dick Michaelson, Donn McKinnon, and John Morford Trade Flyrods for Rakes To Help Ailing Member Charly Heston

by Jim McCully

Since Charley Heston became ill a few months back, many FCFF members have extended many acts of kindness and assistance to him. Charley is our senior member and mentor who showed a lot of guys how to catch their first redfish.

Kitty Michaelson happened to see Charley at a doctor's office and asked him if he needed anything. Since he was talking to a lady, and it was obvious that he wasn't asking for anything, Charley said that what he needed most was to get his yard cleaned up. Well, Kitty told Dick Michaelson, and Dick called up a few FCFF members, and the following Saturday, March 12, six guys spent most of the day raking leaves and clearing branches from Charley's yard.

I have been in a lot of clubs and organizations in my life, but I don't believe that many other groups would volunteer to do yardwork for a sick member.

First Coast Fly Fishers proved again that it is more than a bunch of fishermen; it is a fellowship of the finest kind.



Note From The President: July Outing Date Moved Due To Uhm. . . Uhh, . . . Well, You Read it.

The dates for the July outing to Tomoka State park have been **changed to July 9 & 10**. This is to take advantage of the absence of dynamic ocular refraction brought about by the reflective qualities of lunar and other celestial bodies present and in full view on the date previously published for the outing. (We want a new moon instead of the full moon. Thanks, Chan)

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Kevin Cohenour's Fly Tyer's Corner

by Kevin Cohenour

As I waded into the chilly waters of the North Carolina's Tuckaseegee River three weeks ago, I found it hard to believe a year had passed since my last visit to this tailwater river and her bounty of willing trout. It was mid-afternoon and the river had receded from the higher flows of the day's earlier power plant generation flows; it was very wadeable.

I carefully crossed the rocky river bottom to an area above a hole I refer to as the "Woolly Bugger"



hole, because of its depth.

Since I saw no insect activity on March afternoon, I tied on a black chenille woolly bugger with pearlescent sparkles in it. The fly had a heavy tungsten head and crystal flash in its marabou tail.

I cast my weighted fly across the river, then let it swing downstream. As it neared the end of its arc a fish slammed my fly hard. A minute later I had a nice 14-inch, fat rainbow to hand. I released it carefully, and cast again. A couple more casts and I had on an 18-inch brook trout, again a fat specimen. These fish seemed to be eating well. I had only one hour to fish, but this stroke of good fishing continued until dark.

On the walk back to join my partner, Terry McCormick of Pensacola, I reflected back on the dozen nice fish I had landed, and the 12 or so I'd missed. I'd broken off

North Carolina Ice Fishing?

that first woolly bugger on a submerged rock (the tippet really did break...no curly cues from a slipped knot).

Then I tied on another black woolly bugger, without the flash, and went fishless for 20 minutes. I looked in my box and found a bedraggled specimen from last season, which had the flash in the body and tail. I switched to this worn fly, cast, and immediately caught a trout, then another. Seems they liked 'em flashy.

Back at the tying table that night, I tied up a dozen pearlescent black woolly buggers. Half of them found their way into my friends' hands; the others I kept for me.

In the river the next morning, my rod guides iced over in the 30-degree March mountain morning. Dry fly fishing was very slow, with occasional hatches that sparked no interest from the fish.

(continued on page 5)

Tying The Pearly Bugger

HOOK: 4XL Streamer Hook, size 6 to 12; **WEIGHT:** Brass or tungsten cone of desired size; **THREAD:** 6/0 to match body; **TAIL:** Marabou to match body and pearl krystal flash; **BODY:** Medium pearl chenille in desired color; **HACKLE:** Palmered grizzly or same color as body; **RIB:** Fine gold wire; **LEGS:** Sili legs

1. Slide cone onto hook up to eye. Attach thread behind the eye and wind to the bend.
2. Secure marabou feather at the bend. Wrap over butts to behind cone, cut excess marabou and wrap thread back to the bend.
3. Attach 6-8 strands of crystal flash along each side of the tail. Attach wire rib at the bend, long end to the rear.
4. Attach saddle hackle at the bend by the tip. Strip about 1/4" of chenille and attach at the bend. Wind the thread to mid-shank and attach one leg on each side. Wind thread to rear of cone.
5. Coat shank with head cement and wrap chenille forward, one wrap between legs, and secure at rear of cone. Cut excess.
6. Palmer the hackle forward in widely spaced turns to the cone, with one wrap between legs. Secure and cut excess hackle. Wind the wire forward in the same number of turns as the hackle. Secure and cut excess wire.
7. Whip finish, cut excess thread and cement.



A Redfish Primer by Dr. Jim Beets

by David Lambert

JU's estuaries answer-man Dr. Jim Beets produce volumes of information about local fisheries a few years ago when he spoke to our club. His insights into fish behavior and fisheries prompted a host of questions from the audience.

Many of the club's new members will benefit greatly from a re-hash of the finer points of Jim's talk. Fact is, we could all probably learn more from this. The following are answers from many of the questions asked at the November meeting:

Dr. Beets said that the St. Johns River has the greatest diversity of common fish in the state, and the greatest numbers of species of sharks.

Most people believe that reds grow about 12 inches per year, but those figures normally apply to sexually immature fish. A 37-inch redfish may be 10 or 11 years old. A 24-inch red may be 3+ years old.

As we take more of the larger spawning fish out of the estuaries, the age of spawning females becomes younger. Now, 'these little girls' of 12 inches are spawning, but they don't produce anywhere near the numbers of eggs that a larger spawning-aged females produce.

A 36-inch female may release three million eggs during a spawn, most of which are consumed before they hatch. 'Few big fish equals fewer eggs. Fewer eggs mean fewer fish.'

Redfish generally spawn in channels and mouths of rivers; they don't go offshore and they will aggregate to spawn. The larvae are almost always found inshore until they hatch. Larvae stay in deep pools until they reach one inch, then they move to the grass, where they stay until they reach six inches. Then they move into the creeks and estuaries.

Redfish eat blue crabs, primarily. They have feeding preferences, which depends on the active food in a specific area. They develop a 'search

image' which determines the feeding preference. When the food supply diminishes in an area, redfish will move elsewhere, or they will begin feeding on other food types and develop substitute search images.

Regardless of what search image a redfish has developed, they are opportunists; if you throw a juicy baitfish (or fly pattern) at him, the fish is not likely to pass it up. That said, redfish don't go after baitfish as readily as they go after invertebrates. Find consistent movement of blue crabs in your area and you will find redfish. . . all year long.

Environmental factors have a huge affect on fish feeding behaviors. When temperature and barometric pressure change, fish will seek deeper areas. This activity may last a few hours or as much as a day. By the next day they have grown acclimated to the change and usually will resume normal feeding behavior.

Redfish do not migrate long distances; they are very localized.

Larger crabs and shrimp move in the late winter and early spring; they move en masse and the fish move with them. Larger reds move in small groups to new feeding areas in the fall when the food sources are depleted in an area or when food moves.

Shrimp will follow the salinity front and they will be on the edge of the front, called the salinity wedge. Find that front and you will find the fish. Redfish can tolerate waters with 0 percent salinity, all the way up to 4,500 parts per million.

New data show that snook and tarpon are being caught as far north as Cape Hatteras. Due possibly to the trend to global warming, snook are caught more frequently in this area. They are also larger.

Fish are not bright; they feed based on reaction. They will feed well up to their spawn time and they will feed well after they spawn, but they feed much less during spawn.

When there is a big influx of freshwater or when the tides are very high, fish disperse into larger area. The fish may be dispersed for weeks but they will return to their original areas.

Most fish will change their forage habits during drought years. Drought changes the bait of an area, which in turn changes the fish feeding habits.

Dredging an area kills a forage base, regardless of what the government agencies tell you. "You can kiss the area off and it may take decades before the areas return to their original habitat."

How do redfish perceive a fly? Reds can sense movement 100 meters away. Their lateral line is like having ears all over their body; they perceive vibrations from movement. Any time you go into an area, you disturb it and they hear (feel) you. A fish can sense you if you're behind it. It may or may not perceive you as a threat, but you can count on him knowing that you're there.

A red's zone of perception is large, but it get smaller in shallower water or in water where there is a recent 'blanket' of fresh water.

Most fish do perceive different colors. They have an incredible range of vision, but they may not 'see' colors the way we see them. They may perceive chartreuse as the 27th variation of a shade of gray, for instance. But they do perceive the color change.

Loud or booming noises and voices from the surface can be heard several meters away. On a calm day, whisper; louder voices are less discernable on windy or rainy days.

Speckled trout like open spaces. They won't go much offshore. They can be found in open, deep flats moving into the estuaries.

Small shrimp and crab come inshore in early summer and move offshore in early fall through late fall.

Hinrichs Takes Biggest Permit in Prestigious Del Brown Tourney

by **Capt. Warren Hinrichs**



I fished again this year The Del Brown Invitational Permit Tournament again March 8-11th in the Hurricane Hole Marina in Key West. I fished with Capt. Kris Suplee of Marathon, who can be reached at 305.395.3314 or www.flatsbandit.com. The weather was challenging for the week. The water temperature was cold, the skies were overcast and a front raged

through on Wednesday the 8th, which kept things very unsettled. Permit like consistency.

Day 1 — Capt. Kris Suplee and I didn't see a permit.

Day 2 — We fished the Marquesas with no other boats in sight! We didn't see a fish all day, but we could sense things were heating up later in the day.

Day 3 — We started in the Marquesas, which became calm, overcast and had too much boat traffic later in the morning. Capt. Kris Suplee made a split-second decision to run to a different area to find better conditions for permit. Kris' knowledge and experience paid off when I caught a 27-inch permit on fly. This was the second fish we saw during the tournament. This fish was good enough to secure us the first runner-up win and largest permit of the tournament.

Last year, Capt. Suplee and I were the first runner-up, too — lost by an inch!

On the final day, I threw an 8-wt. and 12-ft.+ leader in very calm conditions. I cast over the back of my fish to have the Merkin sweep toward him. The good- fish karma was used up at that point. We did have a "buzzer fish" at 3:55, but no hook-up.

Of course Capt. Simon Becker and Steve Dunn caught a fish! No surprise there. Andy Mill and Capt. Dustin Huff caught two permit to win the tournament. No surprise there either. The tournament will be moved to July per a vote by the group.

Ice Fishing in NC *Continued on page 3*

Over the course of the six days we spent fishing on the Tuckaseegee and Nantahala rivers, I used this pattern with exceptional success. A second streamer I tied, the "Featherhead," also fished very well. It had been featured on the cover of a recent "Fly Tyer" magazine. The hot color was ginger.

For those of you interested in fishing around the Bryson City area, Yellow Rose Realty in Bryson City rents furnished cabins. When a group of six fishermen venture up for a week, it is a most affordable trip. Find cabins and info on their website — www.yellowroserealty.com

The "Nan" and "Tuck" are known as "Delayed Harvest" rivers. From October to the first Saturday in June all fish are to be released from artificial lures only, no treble hooks. From June to October the locals clean them out. Every October, the state stocks the rivers, frequently with their brood stock, and delayed harvest begins again. This assures lots of fish to catch. Catching a big 24-inch hen is not uncommon. I hooked one this trip, but she got off 10' from my reach. I need to get a longer net I guess, or longer arms maybe.

Anyone interested in additional information can e-mail me at: klcflies@yahoo.com

Until next time....Good tying and fishing!

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Anchor Stake Helps Kayak Hold Ground In Wind & Current

by Rick Palazzini and Bill Scott

Fishing in rainy and /or windy weather conditions is an uncomfortable but potentially rewarding experience.

When attempting to cover prime holding waters under gusty wind conditions, it helps a bunch to be able to position the yak.

Bill Scott helped me solve this problem by fabricating an anchoring staff that is perfect for use in shallow waters. Inherent in its' design is the ease to disconnect from a tangled fish. For those who like to paddle the backwaters and marshes, you find that its' very sharp metal point is useful for distancing a curious gator or aggressive water snake that gets too close

I made the stake out of fiberglass poles. You can use an old rake or hoe handle. For the tip I used the point off of an old bird feeder post that was made of aluminum. It was two sided so I cut it in half and made two poles. I then took a piece of 3/4 aluminum tubing that fit inside both pieces and used pop rivets to hold the tip onto the shaft. Then drill a hole at the top end of the shaft to attach a lanyard. It is light and strong. Works great for poling around quietly and pushing off oyster beds or launching — not to mention whacking a gator in the head when he comes for your fish!!

Another simple way is to take an old golf club and cut the head off. When you want to hold a spot just run it down through a scupper hole. This will work for shallow water but sometimes the mud can be 1 or 2 ft. deep. The fiberglass pole will be about 50 inches and gives you room for incoming tides. When it rusts out, just make another. You can get old clubs at any golf shop for \$5 or \$10. **WARNING!!** Do not hit a gator in the head with a cut off golf club stake. A driver or 2 iron works better. Attack gators at your own risk.



Big Fish River Brings in Big Names

Don Reed of Saltwater Flytyers.com hosted Dave and Emily Whitlock at the Soque River last month. The threesome worked the Atlanta Fly Fishing Show, then snuck off for a day of trout fishing at Black Hawk, outside of Clayton, GA. The month prior, Reed fished the Soque with both club members and Bob clouser.

For Sale

12 ft. Indian River Square Back Canoe. It is a wide flat bottom tunnel hull design. Titled to accomadate small motor. \$300. No accessories. Call Dick Michaelson, 641-1903, 631-8091

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