

First Coast Fly Fisher

February 2005

www.fcff.org

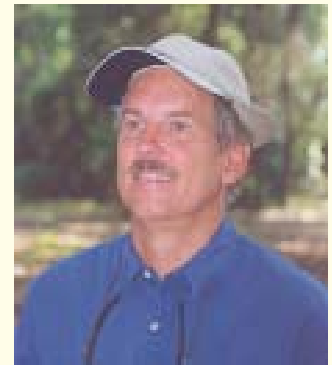
Jacksonville, FL



OYSTER BAR SUNRISE

by Rick Palazzini

FCFF BANQUET



with
acclaimed casting
instructor and fly fishing
world traveler

Jon Cave

Saturday
February 19

UNF Conference Center

Reserve Seats

at

February Meeting

Call Julie Marshall, 241-2854

MEETING & SPEAKER

Mon., Feb 8, 7 p.m. at Southpoint Marriot. **Speaker: Bob Sheedy of Manitoba.**
Topic: Fly Fishing Manitoba & Fishing Lakes for Brown and Rainbow Trout. Meet for Casting w/ David Lambert at 6 p.m.

COMING EVENTS

Sat., Feb 19 -- Annual Banquet, Sign Up Latest By February Meeting.
Sun., Feb 20 -- Annual Fly Fishing Day and Casting Clinic w/ Jon Cave. 16 Casters, \$50 for the intensive casting instruction. David Lambert 241-4163 to sign-up.
June 5-7 -- Annual Hiwassee Float Trip For Trout. See page 4 for more info.

FLY FISHING FOR PEACOCK BASS ON THE RIO NEGRO, BRAZIL

by Dennis J. Majar

(Ed. note: The author is a member of the North Florida Fly fishers in Gainesville)

During early November 2004, I had the opportunity to spend a week fly-fishing for peacock bass in Brazil. Although I had previously fished for peacocks, I had never done so with fly-fishing gear. This was to be a new experience for me and I was excited at the possibilities. However, I was also a bit bewildered due to my lack of knowledge of how to fly fish for



peacocks.

I discovered that there is relatively little information generally available about fly-fishing for this species. This, I was obliged to "learn on the job," so to speak. After extensive research, I booked with Amazon Tours, an American-owned outfit with two lodges located in prime fishing areas of northern Brazil. My lodge, called the "Rio Negro Lodge," was located on the banks of the Rio Negro, a 1,500-mile long tributary of the Amazon River (web-www.peacockbassfishing.com for more information.)

As the name suggests, the Rio Negro is a "blackwater river," having much the same color as our Santa Fe or Suwannee Rivers.

Given the high rainfall of the area, and its concentration in just a few months, the Rio Negro rises and falls around 30 feet during the year. Fishing is only

possible during the low-water months of October to March. The rest of the year the fish are too dispersed to make fishing worthwhile. I arrived when the water level was about midpoint between its high and low points.

The trip to the lodge involved three separate flights and an hour and a half high-speed boat trip. After a short rest, I immediately headed out for some fishing. Although the lodge provides bait casting tackle and lures to the guests, fly fishers are obliged to bring their own gear. I brought a 3-piece, 9-weight rod, a wide arbor saltwater reel with plenty of backing, and about two dozen assorted streamers in 2/0 and 3/0 sizes. I also brought along some Dahlberg Divers and some pencil poppers.

Although I had packed some tapered leaders, I soon found out that 5-6 foot lengths of straight fluorocarbon leader (I ended up using 30# test) worked just fine. I had also taken along some sinking-tip line, but the water in prime fishing areas was only 2 to 4 feet deep and floating line proved sufficient.

The first day out on the river was a learning experience for me. Most importantly, my guide showed me where the peacock bass are likely to concentrate—off the mouths of small tributaries to the main river, in sheltered lagoons, and around white sand bars exposed by the falling water.

I also used that first day to improve my ability to cast large, wind-resistant flies. Once I got the hang of things, I really started catching some fish.

Over the course of the week, I **caught around 250-300 fish**, most in the 5-10 lb. Range; my biggest

(Continued On Page 4)

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FCFF BANQUET AND FLY FISHING WEEKEND WITH JON CAVE. \$1000s IN RAFFLES AND AUCTIONS. FREE CASTING CLINIC, SATURDAY 9:30-1:30

This year's FCFF Banquet and Fly Fishing Weekend will be among the best in FCFF's 15 year history. Don't forget to bring your banquet forms and checkbooks to the February meeting to sign up.

FCFF Banquet and Fly Fishing Weekend, Feb. 19, 2005, at the UNF Conference Center. This year's banquet speaker is author, world-renowned fly casting instructor, and all 'round good guy *Jon Cave*.

Jon is the consummate saltwater fly fisherman. His passion for saltwater led him to a Master of Science degree in natural resources, specializing in fisheries management. He's guided in and fished Florida's salty environs for 40 years, and he's travelled virtually worldwide searching for saltwater game fish on the fly.

Jon Cave is the casting instructor's casting instructor. He was instrumental in establishing the Federation Fly Fishers casting certification program. He's authored and/or co-authored several very good books, including *Fly-Fishing Odyssey*, a beautifully illustrated, hugely



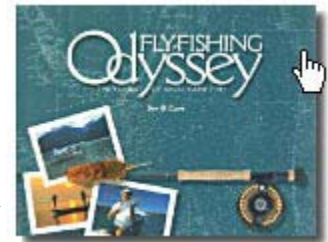
Jon Cave w/ Banquet Chair Julie Marshall

informative fly fishing travel guide. Jon's casting clinics for First Coast Fly Fishers are much anticipated and well-attended events.

As the creator of a number of popular

flies (including "Cave's Wobbler," the original spoon fly, which after 20 years still populates many fly boxes), Jon is a sought-after tying and rigging instructor and speaker.

Capt. Jon Cave is a USCG licensed professional guide



with 40 years experience in saltwater flats fishing. He is the founder of the oldest flyfishing school in Florida at Seminole Community College, co-founder of the Florida Backcountry Flyfishing Association, and an executive board member of the Florida Conservation Association. An outdoor writer and photographer, Capt. Jon has been featured in *FlyFishing in Saltwater*, *Field & Stream*, *Florida Sportsman*, and many other publications.

The 2004 Year End Banquet Weekend Events Schedule:

Saturday, Feb 19, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Free Half-day Clinic with Jon Cave: For all dues-paid members, 9 a.m. Location announced at the January meeting and in the February newsletter. Banquet

Saturday, Feb. 19, 6:30 pm — FCFF Year End Banquet at UNF's Conference Center. Speaker: Internationally recognized casting instructor and author **Jon Cave**. As usual, FCFF will host a great raffle and an auction items along with a special grand prize.

Sunday, Feb 20, 9 a.m. til 4 p.m. — Jon Cave Casting, Tying, and Rigging Clinic. This special clinic is reserved for 16 serious FCFFers, so sign up early. You will come away with increased casting, rigging, and fly tying skills. Contact David Lambert to sign up, 241-4163.

\$4000 Fly Fishing Rods, Reels, Lines, Clothing, Accessories, At Annual FCFF Banquet

Hobie Float-Cat 60 Pontoon Kick Boat
Sage Rod 8-wt. 9ft. LE 2-piece Fly Rod.
Dr. Slick Jumbo Traveling Fly Tyers Kit
Dr. Slick Chain Nose 6" Pliers w/ Cutters
Guy Harvey Tumbler Set 4 (Redfish and Sea Trout)
Borski Ties – Fly tying CD w/ Borski's Great Saltwater Patterns
William Joseph Ultra Light Chest Pack
15-lb Boga Grip
2 Portable Fillet Kits by Fishie
Sunrise Tying Vice
St. Croix Large Arbor Reel – 6/8 weight
2 Frog Togs T-shirts, large, tan
8 wt/9 ft. 4-piece **Reddington Fly Rod** - with case
Kodiak Island Premium Wader Duffel Bag and Fly Rod case
Set of Two Glass Mugs w/ Fish Design
1 Insulated Tumbler w/fish design

Thermacel Mosquito Repellent Device
Two Orvis Battenkill Reel 6-7
Orvis Fly Rod TLS 9/4 piece rod, Tube
Orvis TLS 6 wt. Rod 4 piece rod, Tube
River Keeper Lanyard (Fully loaded)
Two Head Lamps
Two Orvis Wonder lines 8 and 9 WF
Buzz Off Insect Repelling hat
Orvis Stripping Basket
Orvis Padded, Divided Reel Bag
Two Fly Boxes
Safe Passage Chest Pack, Orvis
Safe Passage Mini Chest Pack, Orvis
Belt Loop Watch
Waterproof Gear Bag

Special thanks to past president John Bottko of the Salty Feather, Avid Angler in St. Augustine, and the Orvis Company

250+ Big Peacock Bass On Brazil's Rio Negro

(from Page 2)
weighed 12 pounds (shown in picture).

There are three distinct species of peacock bass in the Rio Negro—spotted, butterfly and black striped—and I caught examples of all of them. I lost several large peacocks (the world record is 27 lbs.) that I could not stop with my 9-wt. and who wrapped line and leader around the branches of submerged trees.

Besides peacock bass, I also caught quite a few



like fish called "bicudas", piranhas, catfish, and various other exotic fish.

Before departing from Gainesville, I had filled my fly boxes with Deceivers and Clousers in various colors, but color did not seem to matter once I got on the water. All of the flies were savagely attacked regardless of their color. (I also tried the Dahlbergs and poppers for a while but had little luck on them.)

Of the two-dozen streamers I carried with me to Brazil, only two made it back home in serviceable condition! This suggests that anglers contemplating a week's fly-fishing for peacock bass should plan to take along at least four dozen flies, maybe even more. Besides taking more flies I would also recommend fishing a little later in the season, say in mid-December to mid-January. This is when the water level is the lowest and the fish are most concentrated. I have been told that sight-fishing for huge peacocks (20 lb. plus) is possible during this period, and that the

chances of landing a real big one on a fly rod increases dramatically because most leader fouling vegetation is no longer submerged.

Although many tout the fighting abilities of such fish as smallmouth bass, tarpon and snook, I would vote for peacock bass as, pound for pound, the toughest fish I've ever tangled with. They also readily take flies, which make them number one in my book. Besides the great sport fishing opportunities on the Rio Negro, it was a great privilege for me to spend a week in one of the last great wildernesses in the world. Aside from my guide Sindoca, my only companions on my daily outings were howler monkeys, red macaws, pink freshwater dolphins, giant river otters, and iridescent blue Morpho butterflies. Is that heaven, or what?



**Plan Now For Annual
Hiwassee River Trip,
June 5-7, 2005**

Join 10 FCFFers on one of the better trips we do as a club -- The Annual Hiwassee Float Trip for rainbow and brown trout June 5 thru 7, 2005. Float down the Hiwassee River in McKenzie driftboats. Contact Bud Larsen to get on the list or for more details work 398-0055, home 7249187.



New Member Bill Scott Displays a Fine Black Bass From The January Outing

Bass Lake Outing Success Despite Cold

About a dozen FCFF members gathered two weekends ago in bass boats, jon boats, canoes, and kayaks just north of I-75 to fish one of the states premium private phosphate

lakes.

The day was blustery, northeaster conditions, but the bite was on and most FCFFers caught fish. See photos on page6 for more.

FIRST REDFISH ON A FLY

by **Bill Scott, new FCFF member**

My first red on a fly was a keeper and boy was he fun. Rick Palazzini and I were at Guana and it was a bit windy. We went in at high tide and fished all around. Rick caught 10 fish, trout and reds -- but all were undersized and plenty of fun.

When low tide arrived the wind stopped and the water looked like glass. We could finally see some movement in the water and we started fishing these areas. As I eased over to the opposite side I spooked a red. All of the sudden the water raised up into a huge wake. I had never seen this before. I thought my heart was going to pop out of my chest.

I backed off and tied on a fly that Palazzini had made for me and had been catching fish on all day. I eased into position and watched the water. When I saw some movement ahead I cast the fly dead on. The red hit it hard and we began the ride. He pulled my kayak all around for what seemed like eternity. When I got it to the yak he invited himself over for dinner. I gladly accepted. He was 24" and the biggest I have caught to date.

Redfish Stew

- 1 large fennel bulb with stalks
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cups chopped onion
- 1.5 cups diced red bell pepper
- 4 garlic cloves minced
- 2 cups dry white wine
- 1 cups water
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1.5 teaspoons dried Italian seasoning
- .5 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- .5 teaspoon salt
- 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes with basil, garlic and oregano, undrained
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 pound skinless fish (red fish) cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1/2 pound shrimp peeled and deveined
- 1/2 pound sea scallops cut in half or quartered depending on the size
- 1/4 cup minced parsley
- 1 can artichoke hearts (optional but good)

1. Trim rough outer leaves from fennel, and chop feathery fronds to measure 1/4 cup; set aside. Remove and discard stalks. Cut fennel bulb in half lengthwise and discard core. Chop bulb to measure 1 1/2 cups.

2. Heat oil in large pot over medium heat. Add onion, and saute' 3 minutes. Add chopped fennel bulb and bell pepper: saute' 7 minutes or until tender. Stir in garlic and next 8 ingredients (through bay leaves); Bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat, simmer 15 minutes.

3. Add fish, shrimp and scallops. Cover and simmer 10 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Stir in chopped fennel and parsley fronds. Discard bay leaves. Add fresh ground black pepper if you like (to taste).

Yield : 6 serving @ 1 1/2 cups per serving.

SUPPORT YOUR FCFF GUIDES & INSTRUCTORS

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Salty Feather

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

Avid Angler

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



January Outing produced lots of nice fish. Clockwise from top left --Rick Pallazzinis kayak keeper; Dick Michaelson with new TFO Reel; Donn McKinnon with big boy bass; rick Palazzini at put in with kayak.



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