

# FIRST COAST FLY FISHER

WWW.FCFF.ORG

APRIL 2009



*Redbelly Off Bed  
by Rob Benardo*

# *April Outing: Fish The Plentiful Waters of The North Mosquito Lagoon*

Come join us Friday April 24 at John Bottko's Salty Feather. John has charts and TopSpot maps of the Mosquito Lagoon, plus flies, lines, and whatever you need. We'll supply the food and drink.

April's club outing will be in the North Mosquito Lagoon. Depending on weather, we'll either launch from JB's Fish Camp or the ~~St. Johns~~ Edgewater area.

Fishing in the North osquito lagoon can be really good in the Spring. Big reds, schoolies, trout, some flounder, and others available. Good flies are slatwater poppers for trout, Clousers and baitfish flies for reds and others.

Come to the April meeting. Capt. Warren Hinrichs tell how and where to fish the North Mosquito. Woody Huband will lead this outing, [whuband@yahoo.com](mailto:whuband@yahoo.com).



**Former FCFE president Chan Ritchie displays beautiful spec caught at the March Ocala National Forest Outing.**

## **FCFF Calendar**

Monday, April 6 -- FCFE Meeting, casting 6 p.m. at the hotel pond. Meeting 7 p.m. Southpoint Marriott. Speaker: Capt. Warren Hinrichs. Warren is by all accounts one of the most successful fly fishers from our area. He's twice won the Del Brown Permit Tourney and fishes the North Mosquito Lagoon often. Come learn how to fish our creeks and the North Mosquito.

Wednesday Apr 8, 15, 22, 29 - Fly tying Classes at M & M Dairy. Free to members. Sign up with Rich Santos, [rsloves2fish@comcast.net](mailto:rsloves2fish@comcast.net)

Friday, April 24 - 5-7 p.m. Outings Friday at Salty Feather. Open to all FCFEers. Come learn flies, get boat mates, charts, maps of North Mosquito. And and have a dog and burger on us.

Saturday, April 25 - Outing to North Mosquito Lagoon. Come to April meeting or contact David Lambert . Woody Huband will lead this outing. Meet at the 1-95 & SR 210 truckstop at 6 a.m. Saturday morning. We'll try to be fishing about 9 a.m or later if the weather's cooler. Woody Huband [whuband@yahoo.com](mailto:whuband@yahoo.com)

Monday, May 4 - FCFE Meeting. Casting 6 p.m., meeting 7 p.m. Speakers: Our own John Adams, Bill Lott and Capt. Mike McQuiston tell us how, when, what flies, and where to catch those fine bream and bass on the St. Johns River near Toccoi. We may even ask John to tie his highly regarded Adams Bream Fly, one of the catching-est bream fies on the market. All this in regards the May Outing, the Annual Lott Lunch and Bream/BAss Fishery. See below

Saturday, May 9 - Annual Lott Lunch Outing and Bream/Bass Fishing Outing on the St. Johns River near Piccolata. This is an especially well attended full on banquet lunch and bream bass fishing outing. It is always our best feast of the year in a lovely riverfront surroundings of the Bill and Ann Lott's home. We usually have 50 or so people show up for this, so please call Ann Lott and give her a heads up and bring a covered dish or dessert. More3 this at the April and May meetings. Please coordinate with Ann [annlott@aug.com](mailto:annlott@aug.com)

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*Can You Locate 5 Small Gators in This Gator Den Photo?*

## Two Views of The Ocala Outing

*One From the Paddle; One from the Throttle*

**by Rob Benardo**

The FCFE Ocala outing was scheduled for the lakes of the Ocala National Forest but the wind changed all that. Rick, Bob, Jason and I decided to fish an area that offered some shelter from the extreme conditions--and that area was Alexander Springs. Alexander Springs offers a paddle-only creek which puts in off CR 445 and takes out on CR 552-B

It was a 5.8 mile downstream paddle from the launch to the take out and required us to coordinate a shuttle. With Jason's truck parked at the take out we were on the water fishing by 9Am. The river started as a wide lily pad dotted crystal clear body of water from 1 to 3 feet deep and full of fish. I had a take on my first cast. We were fishing top water poppers and everyone was catching fish.

As we made our way down river we found that it narrowed. The further south we went the more the surroundings changed and by mid way down we felt like we were fishing a completely different area.

The winds were brutal and at times you would find yourself tangled and cursing but the action was none stop.

After 9 hours of fishing and paddling we made our way to the chicken Shack in Bunnell for some fine fried chicken. We shared our best catch stories and memorable moments over a

couple of ice teas and beers. On my ride home tired and spent with lightning flashing on the northern horizon I couldn't help but feel lucky and thankful to have made so many great friends through the FCFE.

**by David Lambert**

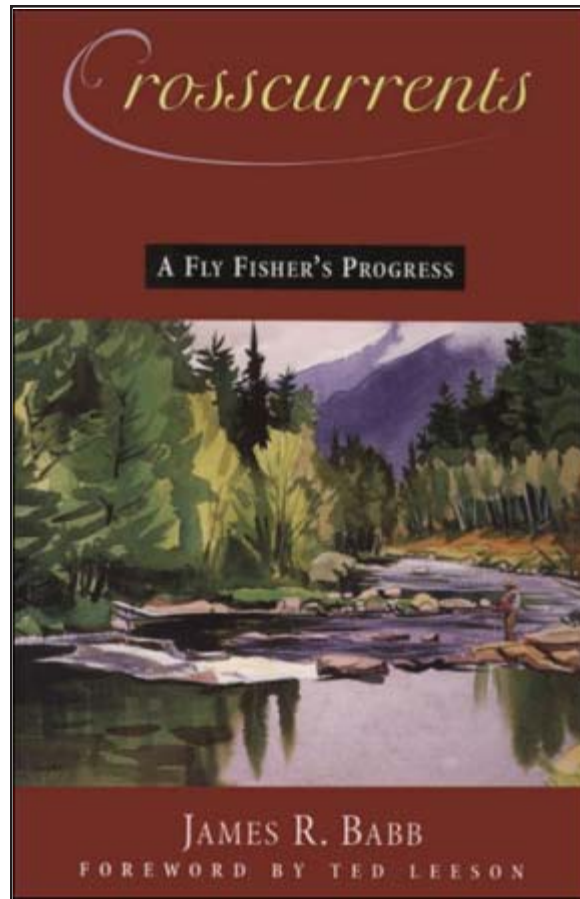
Was it 15 or more like 20? Can't remember how many of us showed in the dull morning light of the SR210 truck stop to get directions and look at the skies before driving to the Ocala National Forest to fish. We were roughly split in numbers, though; half in motorized craft; half in paddle craft.

My motor group reasonable numbers of reported fish caught; sometimes lots of fish, but some lied less. Lee Hinrichs and Brad Bravo fished the East Ocklawaha, south and east of SR 19. Primitive and lush is this river. Lots of nature and lots of clear blackwater to fish. Blackwater is a bit of a mis-use, though. The bottom is black with millennia of rotting vegetation, mucky and sulphurous, but the water is deceptively glass bottle clear. Lots of fish caught. Bravo and Lee caught 30? 40? Lost count.

Michaelson, myself, Chan, Larry Holder, new member John McCoy and Jim Fallon fished the river from its East confluence with St. Johns. Launched at Welaka's Elm Street BR. Decent ramp

*(continued on page 7)*

# *Southern Voice Now Heard In FF Literature*



Crosscurrents- A Fly Fisher's Progress, by James R. Babb  
The Lyons Press  
ISBN: 1-55821-946-3

One voice is missing from contemporary fly fishing literature: That voice has a Southern accent. Most recent fly fishing literature is written by authors who hale from the Northeast or the West. Enter James Babb. Babb was born and raised in East Tennessee but has spent most of his adult life living and working north of the Mason-Dixon.

In *Crosscurrents*, his first offering to world of fly fishing literature, the red clay of his birth shines through.

An angling columnist then editor for Gray's Sporting Journal since 1997, Babb has seen his share of literary ignominy—fishing guides who think they can write and writers who think they can fish. According to Babb, he has “rejected enough introspective fly-fishing essays to fill the body of a ten wheel dump truck.”

So, why on earth would he want to publish what he calls “another collection of naval-grazing essays from a baby boomer who got hold of a fly rod and a word processor?”

There's an easy answer: Babb is a fisherman born and bred—a fisherman with an ear for voice and speech and word rhythm. Add to the mix that most Southerners are natural storytellers and you might have an idea why Babb made the risky decision to add to the already overloaded bookshelf of fly fishing essays.

But Babb's risk is our reward, because *Crosscurrents* is a collection of fine essays. Sure, his first offering has its naval-grazing moments. Babb has affection for the stories and essays of Gierach, Leeson and Lyons. But he also admires the masters—Twain, Thoreau and Melville.

Babb writes of distant waters, but also of the small local waters we all fish and often dispense with too easily. His essays move between the bream ponds of the South to the glacial ponds of Maine's North Woods to the blue Pacific waters of Midway Island and ponds between. He writes of his blue collar introduction to fly fishing, fishing with his father and introducing his northern-born wife to the South. He draws upon his own life experiences for each essay.

In his fifty-odd years Babb has worked as a commercial fisherman, truck driver, and book editor. In the woods of coastal Maine, he built his own house by hand. His career in the publishing industry affords him the opportunity to fish the world's most storied waters. But *Crosscurrents* is not a travel log; anything but. Fly fishing plays a pivotal role in each of his essays, but it is his description of people and places that are most interesting. In any given essay he will merge the wit of Twain and the transcendentalism of Thoreau. His essays are honest, pure and poignant, with an underlying sense of humor that essayists from the North and West sadly lack.

*Crosscurrents* is much more than a study in omphaloskepsis. It is a fine collection of essays about the simple pleasures of fly fishing by a Southern gentleman who calls the Maine woods his home.

Since *Crosscurrents*, Babb has published two other books of essays: *River Music: A Fly Fisher's Four Seasons* and *Fly-Fishin' Fool: The Adventures, Misadventures and Outright Idiocies of a Compulsive Angler*, each as enjoyable as the first.

*book review*  
by Jason C. Sheasley





# How Rod Action Affects Your Cast

*By Bruce Richards*

from the FFF Master Instructor Test Study Guide.

All fly rods are not born equal. Most of the fly rods built today cast very well, but differences in flex or 'action' can have a big impact on how they cast. Understanding the differences in these basic rod 'actions' and what you need to do to adjust your casting stroke to make them cast well, can make you more effective with any rod.

Over the years I've heard many times that a beginner should start casting with a soft, slow, forgiving rod. In reality, very soft, flexible rods can be difficult to cast, especially for beginners. These rods are prone to throwing tailing loops because they are easy to overload, causing the rod tip to travel in a downward, arcing path. To prevent this from happening takes a very smooth casting stroke, something that takes most anglers some time to master. A beginner may be doing everything almost right but still get consistently tailing loops that can be very frustrating, all because of the slow action of their rod. Casting a lighter line can help some, but a long, smooth stroke is still necessary.

At the other extreme are stiff, fast action rods. These rods are very tailing loop resistant, but there are other issues that can make them difficult to cast, especially for inexperienced casters. Because these rods don't load or bend much when casting at normal distances the angler doesn't have the

feeling of direct contact with the line. This vague feeling can make it difficult to determine the timing of the cast. Since there is little rod load at short to medium distances it is often necessary to cast harder with a stiff rod which often results in wider, inefficient loops if the stroke isn't just right.

Fast rods are excellent for long distance casts. They are made to work well when carrying longer than normal lengths of line in the air; this loads them properly. If an angler doesn't want to cast long, or isn't capable, fast rods can be very frustrating to use. Fortunately there is an easy fix to this problem. Using a line one or even two sizes heavier than the rod is rated for supplies the load that the rod requires to work well, but at a shorter distance.

As you have probably guessed, a rod with an action somewhere between very slow and very fast is right for most anglers in most applications. Fortunately, most of the popular rods made today fall into this medium action category. They are stiff enough to cast non-tailing loops when cast reasonably well at normal fishing distances. They are soft enough to load well at the same distances, while giving the angler good feel of the line. While maybe not the ultimate short distance spring creek rod, or long distance cannon, medium action rods handle most day to day fishing casts with ease, without major casting stroke adjustments.



# Unk's Midnight Shrimp

## *Resilient Fly For Night Trout Fishing*

*by Hugh Smith*

from the Tampa Bay Fly Fishers

On occasion I've found our summertime trout getting a little selective under the lights, not always but sometimes. When that happens stop and watch what the current is bringing under your light. Usually when the fish are a little selective they will be keying on shrimp or baitfish. If most of the blowups are on shrimp here's a simple, easy-to-tie pattern works pretty well.

Materials Hook: No. 6 Mustad 34007 or equivalent  
Thread: Brown or tan Danville's "Flat Waxed" Nylon  
Eyes: Small brass dumbbells Tail: Tan marabou and brown or black grizzly hackle Flash: Two strands of crystal flash, chart, tan, or pearl Body: Tan metallic medium Estaz

Tying Instructions Step 1: With the hook rightside up in the vice, start the thread at the eye and wrap aft to the bend and back to a point on the shank half way between the point and the eye Step 2: Mount the eyes with five turns x-rapped each direction and five turns parachute style Step 3: Select a single marabou feather and cut to length, mount the feather with the stem starting just aft of the eyes, wrapped to just short of the bend. Mount the flash with two strands each side of the marabou. Mount one small thin grizzly hackle on each side of the tail (not splayed) Step 4: Mount Estaz on the shank of the hook and

"X-wrap" the eyes. Tie off the Estaz short of the hook eye. Whip finish the head and cement. Note: I apply small drops of cement (Hard-as-nails) at each step along the way. This makes the fly a tad uglier (less professional looking) but allows 40-50 specs to come aboard before it starts to depreciate

### ***FCCF Fly Tying Classes***

***Begin Wed., Apr. 8.***

***Sign Up Now!***

**What: SaltWater Fly Tying**

**Dates: Wednesday nights ,April 8, 15, 22, and 29 from 6:30 - 9 p.m.**

Come join us for FCCF's Fly Tying classes, free for members. These classes will get you tying and fishing your own saltwater flies in just a few short lessons. This class is for members who are new to tying and or who want to improve their saltwater techniques.

This year's instructors include Don Reed of Saltwaterflytyers.com <<http://saltwaterflytyers.com/>> , Dick Michealson author of Fly Fishing Florida's First Coast and FCCF education director Rich Santos. This is a great opportunity to learn from the best in four weekly evening classes.

All tools and materials are furnished by the club or feel free to bring your own. Space in these classes is limited so sign up early. Contact Education Director Rich Santos, [rsloves2fish@comcast.net](mailto:rsloves2fish@comcast.net)





*Above, Bob Connery Offers a Friendly Wave Before A 9-Hour Paddle; Right, Rick Palazzini Casts at Alexander Springs Canoe run; Bottom, Beautiful Bright Redbellies of The Forest. Photos by Rob Benardo*

## Ocala Forest Fishing Fun For Paddler and Boater

*continued from page 3*

but few parking spots. Three-quarter mile run south and west across a bumpy St. Johns to the Ocklawaha opening.

Fishing partner Larry Holder and I agreed: We expected Paleo-indians to emerge from the banks of this river. It's incredibly primitive, with little boat traffic on our visit. Fishing was spotty for us in our first little trib, maybe 5-6 fish, then we changed water and flies and our day turned more productive. Wind diminished some, too. Mostly stumpknockers and redbellies. We motored to a small trib about 1/2 mile in. Chan and Dick came in later.

Chan remarked that this was the single most beautiful piece of water he's ever fished. That from a southern boy who's fished the Bayou Country, Gulf, and mountains all his life. We ran up on an alligator den. Five or six little ones busied themselves watching us, but mama weren't nowhere to be seen. And that's a good thing, since it's nesting season and mama reptilians are know'd to get get cranky about their young'uns.

Fishing was technical and tight due to breeze and trees—but lots of fun. Fish counts? My partner and I totaled maybe 12-15 fish. Michaelson and Chan? We saw them catch lots of hand-size panfish and a nice spec.

Possibly 40 fish?

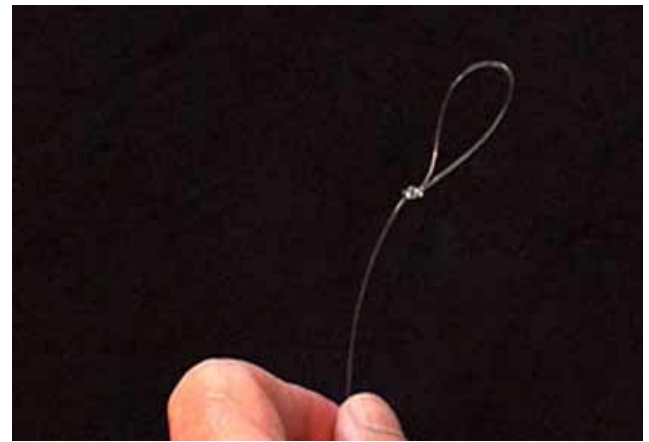
Was there a mention of a gator-catch somewhere? There will be no film footage of that one, but suffice to say it was smaller than my rumored gator catch a year or so earlier. Jim and John didn't fare so well. Smaller numbers, but fish to the boat, still.

By 2:30 the wind increased and the skies darkened and the clouds deepened in color and urgency. We hooked our flies and started for the ramp. By 3:30 we were deep into lunch at East Palatka's famous Corky Bell's. Seafood is a simple treat there. Beer's not bad either—2-for-1 Yuengling on Saturday afternoons. Then back to the truck stop to swap cars and home to life and other loves.





Photo: Woody Huband



## From The Web: Building the Perfection Loop and Watching “The Movie” Free

Knots are a critical element of your fly fishing system. Not only is knotting as important to your fish catching success as the net is more important than those knots you use to build or extend the life of your leader.

The Perfection Loop is an excellent knot at the part of the butt section which you attach to the end of your fly line. Tied properly, the Perfection is a 90- to 95-percent efficient knot. If you use a 50-lb. butt section for your loop, the knot will hold at least 45-lbs before it breaks. Your tippet will break far quicker than that.

The beauty of the perfection Loop is that it presents a much smaller diameter profile than Double or Triple Surgeon’s Loop, a knot many of us prefer to tie, since it’s simpler. But, a properly tied and seated Perfection Loop is a much cleaner knot than the Surgeon’s Loop. It collects less debris in the water. When you tie it correctly, it provides a sort-of visual confirmation that the knot is tied properly—the tag end extends exactly perpendicular from the middle of the knot.

*MidCurrent.com* publisher Marshall Cutchin is an old hand at knots. See a Marshall’s excellent video on tying the perfection loop here: <http://www.midcurrent.com/articles/knots/perfection.aspx>

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Gotta love Jason Borger. Not only does he have an excellent book out on fly casting, his website (<http://jasonborger.com>) contains art, musings, casting tech, and lots of links. One thing we love that his site offers is a full length version of *A River Runs Through It*. Jason performed the “Shadow Casting” in the film. Here’s a link to the film on Jason’s site. It’s an absolutely free, fairly hi-def version. Click the top right corner rectangle for full screen version. Grab your loved one, a beverage, and sit back for two full hours of great movie making. It’s the film that got so many people interested in fly fishing.

<http://jasonborger.com/2009/02/09/now-playing-a-river-runs-through-it/>





Photo: Woody Huband

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is about to happen*

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