

FIRST COAST FLY FISHER

NOVEMBER 2009

- CCA Banquet
Dec 3
- Guana Outing
Nov 21
- Shooting Line
- Clinch River
Surprise
- And more



FIRST COAST
FLY FISHERS
OFFICERS & BOARD

PRESIDENT

Rob Bernardo
rob@flyyaker.com

VP PROGRAMS

Woody Huband
whuband@yahoo.net

VP'S OUTINGS

David Lambert
Dick Michaelson
smartcasts@gmail.com

TREASURER

John Adams
adamsriverside@comcast.
net

SECRETARY

Seth Nerke
acnerke@hotmail.com

LIBRARIAN

Troy James
troyjames@aol.com

EDUCATION

Rich Santos
rslov2fish@comcast.net

MEMBERSHIP

Bart Isaac
redfishbum@comcast.net

AT LARGE

Rick Palazzini
palbro@comcast.net
Jasmin Mackic
jmackic@comcast.net

BANQUET

Jason Sheasley
pgflyfisher@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER

David Lambert, editor
smartcasts@gmail.com

Top: Jon Cave Demonstrates Cast To FCFFers In October. Bottom, Bart Isaac's 7-Pound Redfish Caught Early November.

Top photo: Woody Huband; Bottom Bart Isaac

PHOTOS

& Coming Attractions



Coming Soon To A Club Near You

Saturday, Nov 21 - Discover Guana with First Coast Fly Fishers. Guana River and Lake are two of our area's great resources. Come feast first, then fish with us, Saturday, Nov. 21. We'll meet at the picnic tables o A1A across from the Gate Station in South ponte Vedra. It's about 1/2 way between Pnte Vedra and Vilano Bridge. Meet at 10:30 a.m. for an early lunch and drinks, then break out to fish. Bigger boats can launch from the public ramp near Caps restaurant. Smaller craft and paddle-craft, launch from Guana dam (\$4 entrance charge since it's also a State Park).

Monday, Dec. 7 - FCFF Meeting. Meeting at 7. Speaker: Capt. Tony Bozzella. Topic: fishing for schooling winter redfish in the intracoastal. Capt. Tony been fishing since he can remember. He's a retired navy chief and one of the most studied, knowledgeable fish finders in our area. He's won the red-Trout Classic for many years and is comfortable fishing for all species. you'll learn lots.

Saturday, Dec 12 -Intracoastal/Creeks from Sister's through Nassau River

Winter Redfish, Trout. Launch around 8 a.m. from Sister's Creek, Sawpit Creek, or Cedar Point. Low tide is at 11:12 a.m. in the Sister's Creek to Nassau River area. We'll fish through the low tide and 2-3 hours of the incoming, or more. This can be a great visual fishery. The reds are bunch together in schools and they move en masse in the creeks and Intracoastal. Fish with Clousers and baitfish imitations. At our December meeting, Capt. Tony Bozzella, will talk specifically about this exciting fishery.

Tennessee's Clinch River



*by Dana Griffin III
& Jodi Slapcinsky*

***'Guides
usually have reasons
for what they do. It's
best not to question
- just do what your
guide says.'***

Frigid water, spunky trout, plus a big surprise – all those awaited us as we began a day-long float trip on a section of Tennessee's Clinch River. Our guide, who wished to be called by his nickname "Rocky," ordered up a 6 a.m. departure. Given the shortened days of mid September, we couldn't help wonder how any of us would be able to see to cast much less thread tippet through the eyes of tiny hooks in the pre-dawn darkness.

But guides usually have reasons for what they say and do. Since their business thrives or withers on the strength of client recommendations, it's best not to question. Just do what your guide says. He wants you in a happy frame of mind at the end of the day.

So, here we were, seated in a remarkably stable drift boat, straining to see any detail as we launched into the darkness. Only with the breaking dawn could we begin to make out the

Nice Trout and A Surprise



Left: Dana Griffin hoists a surprise carp from the cold Clinch River water. Center: A Clinch River rapid. Right: Jodi Slapcinsky and a nice Clinch bow.

contours of the river, still shrouded in mist. The river was quiet, millpond quiet. We were 7 miles below Norris Dam, the first dam constructed by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The installation of the dam changed the river's ecosystem. Many endangered mussels and fish species were put under additional stress. At the same time, the cold water issuing from the bottom of the dam allowed the survival of trout. And it was trout that we had come to catch. The cold water has changed something else. The original diversity of aquatic insects has been replaced by less diversity and by a prodigious increase in midges. This sets the rules for the fly fishing game. You want to catch trout on the Clinch, you better come with midge pupae and midge emerger patterns. Sizes can vary a bit, but don't bring anything larger than a size 20. We came with a nice assortment of 18s. The guide discouraged their use. Too big! These pepper grain size flies are knotted on 6X tippets, so you can't horse these fish in.

The Clinch harbors three species of trout, the native brookie, plus introduced browns and rainbows. Rocky says that on some floats his sports will catch more of one kind than the others, but on the next float it can be entirely different.

On the day we booked apparently rainbows were up to bat. We managed to catch around 25-30 of these bright, feisty fish. They ran from 8 to 14 inches. In between battling rainbows, the odd brook trout or brown came to the net. The flies sank like stones. That's good when you need to get your offering down where the trout feed. Tungsten beads were used to add weight to the flies. Tungsten is quite a bit heavier than brass and this works out well because a tiny hook can only manage a small bead. Rocky showed us an unusual strike indicator, the Thingamabobber. These resemble small balloons and will continue to float long after yarn and foam indicators have become waterlogged. Several catalog retailers carry them.

We fell into a bit of a routine: cast out and slightly upstream, execute an upstream mend, watch the indicators for any sign of a strike. It was all going more or less as the guide hoped it would when Dana's little zebra midge stopped. No vicious strike, it just stopped. Then the leader began to move upstream, leaving a small v-wake to indicate where it entered the water. He pulled back and announced to those on board, "I don't know what this

continued on page 7

To Writer McManus, Life Outdoors Is A Laugh

Kerplunk!

Stories by Patrick F. McManus
Simon & Schuster
ISBN: 9780743280501

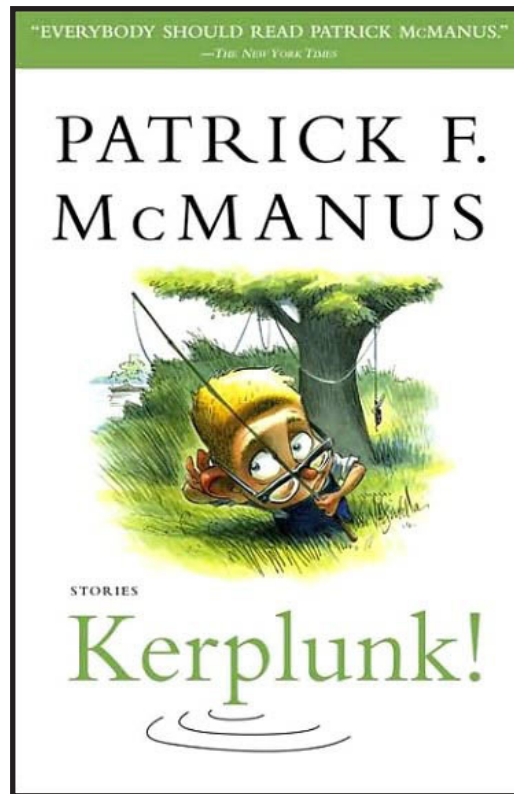
I first discovered outdoor humorist Patrick McManus nearly 30 years ago at my family's summer cabin in Pennsylvania. The cabin was a repository for issues of old outdoor magazines and the occasional *Playboy*. On days when the weather forced us inside, I did my time with back issues of *Outdoor Life* and *Field and Stream*. In them, always at the back of the magazine, I found Patrick McManus' 'Exit Laughing' column.

For 40 years outdoor humorist wPatrick McManus has made us laugh while showing us that the outdoors is an unpredictable and dangerous place. Those perils, real or imagined, have come to define McManus and his comic misadventures are legendary among outdoorsmen.

Reading McManus is like spending time with an old fishing buddy – one who is equal parts Mark Twain, Art Buchwald and Garrison Keillor. Often his humor is self-effacing, occasionally sarcastic. The fun of McManus' writing is that we see ourselves in his ridiculous situations. Nearly everyone can relate to them, both seasoned outdoorsmen and armchair wannabes.

Kerplunk!, McManus' 18th book, is a collection of essays from the back pages of *Outdoor Life*. It may be his last such collection, sadly, because the magazine dropped McManus in April of this year.

McManus' essays derive from his submerged optimism, skewed perspective and sense of the absurd.



reviewed by Jason C. Sheasley

In one essay he contemplates the time devoted to pursuing fish:

If I go an hour without a bite, I begin to suspect that all the fish have disappeared from the world. In another hour, I am certain of it. In another hour, I realize that fish have never existed in the first place.

He further writes: *I am convinced that the very act of fishing is one of the first signs of serious dementia. It is giving in to the delusion that something called fish once actually occupied space in the world – Santa Claus, Easter Bunny, Tooth Fairy, fish.*

In another essay McManus tackles the delicate, but age-old issue of hunting dog flatulence. I've owned several dogs through the years so I can attest that McManus is knowledgeable on the subject. His introduction to the embarrassment of – uh – dog vapor began when, on a teenage date, he and his girlfriend learned why you should never feed a dog a bowl of leftover turkey gravy.

Longtime McManus fans can rest assured that *Kerplunk!* includes visits from McManus' Blight County, Idaho, childhood friends, including Retch Sweeney, Crazy Eddie Muldoon, and Rancid Crabtree.

After 28 years of 'Exit Laughing' columns for *Outdoor Life*, the magazine terminated his contract. Patrick McManus is one of the highest paid writers in the outdoors market, so their decision comes as little surprise, especially when so many of our good print publications have closed down the presses.

But departure from *Outdoor Life* doesn't mean that McManus will be retiring. His third mystery novel

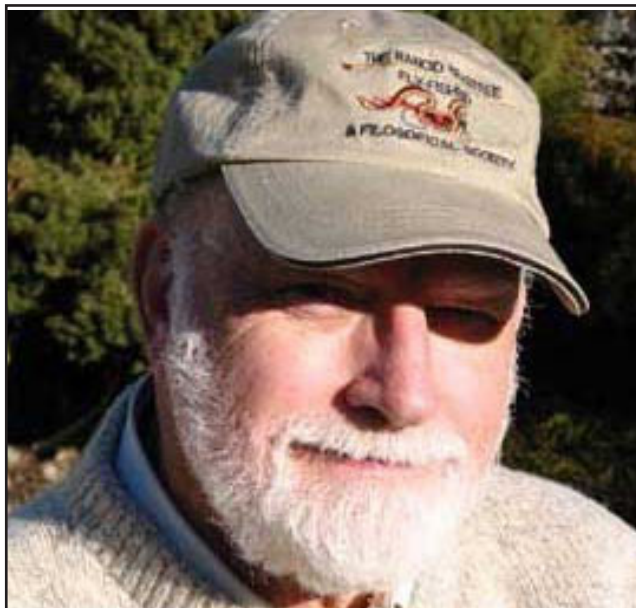
Come Join FCFFers: In Support of CCA Annual Banquet Dec 3. Prizes & Auction



The 19th annual Northeast Florida CCA banquet will be held on Thursday, 03 Dec. at the San Jose Hunting and Fishing Club at 9010 San Jose Blvd. The gun club is located just across Goodbys Creek from the San Jose Hooters at Baymeadows and San Jose. The doors open at 6:00 and the Texas Cattle Co. will provide a great meal, cash bar and many great outdoors and fishing trips on the silent and live auctions as well as fishing gear bargains. The ticket prices are the same as in past years; \$75 per individual or \$120 per

couple which includes the meals and also a CCA membership. There will be no ticket sales at the door.

All monies generated from the only fund raiser for the Northeast Chapter will go to continue CCA Florida's conservation efforts. If we can get eight of our FCFF members to commit, we can get a designated FCFF table which will show the clubs support in all of the banquet bulletins. For more information, contact Gary Burdette at: 285 8102 (Home) or 233 5243 (Cell).



Author Patrick F. McManus

Kerplunck! continued

– *The Double-Jack Murders* – was published in October. Additionally, McManus, a self-admitted luddite, maintains a web site – <http://www.patrickfmcmanus.com> – where he writes a monthly column and his wife Bun maintains a blog. The website also offers information about his recently published novels and his 18 previous collections of essays.

Clinch River Surprise continued

is, but it's big.” The fish would not come up. It just kept moving away from the boat, in the general direction of Norris Dam, now around 9 miles back upstream. Ten to 15 minutes later we caught a glimpse of the brute. It was a large carp! The fish was gently eased closer to the boat where Rocky slipped his big varsity net under its belly.

Carp are heavy, solid fish. This particular specimen weighed in at 12 pounds and taped at 31 inches. A big carp, yes, but not nearly as big as the species can grow. Nevertheless, it seemed remarkable, maybe even impossible, that this fish could see a size 20 dark fly moving along near the bottom of a dark river bed, engulf it and then stay on without parting the 6X tippet. Without doubt, it qualifies as our Clinch River surprise!



Techniques for Shooting Fly Line

by Gordy Hill

I'd like to briefly describe some of the line shooting techniques that have helped me in actual fishing situations over the years. I won't get into hauling, since I've recently gone through a mountain of information on that subject.

The combination of a tight loop and high loop speed is needed for to shoot a good amount of line.

For fishing/distance casts, I find that elevating my casting arm and pointing the rod directly at a point just above the place where I want the fly to land ("target") during the shoot helps gain a bit more distance.

Turning my rod so the guides point toward my inner side helps, too, because it reduces guide friction and line slap against the rod shaft.

Holding my line hand directly over the very **center** of the pile of coiled line on my skiff deck during the shoot with the line shooting through a "guide" made by my thumb and forefinger helps prevent a line tangle. This technique of having the running line shoot through this hand "guide" does slightly diminish total distance achieved, but the trade-off is well worth the loss unless I'm casting to a fish at the very upper limit of my distance ability.

This works simply because taking line rapidly from out to the side of the pile of line is much more likely to yield a knot or tangle than when taking it from the center.

(It is just the opposite when reeling in line from the bottom of the pile. In that case, it works best to keep the reel low to the deck and reel slowly from the side.)

I learned this one from Lefty: If you have already begun to shoot line out to a fish and you see a line knot coming off the pile of line on the deck, a lightning quick twist of the rod so the guides point up toward the sky may save the shoot once in a while. (Still won't shoot far, but may not get stuck on the way.)



(By the same token, if you are reeling in line which already had a tangle between the rod tip and the fly... or even a fish you are fighting, turning the rod so the guides point straight up will make it a lot less likely that the tangle will jamb in the guides.)

When casting directly into a stiff wind, finishing my cast with a forward THRUST and literally having no stop until I've "run out of arm" helps. This has been called, by Jason Borger, the **thrust cast**. Minor variations of that technique have been called the, "storm cast"

(Charles Ritz) and the, "wind cast" (Lefty Kreh). When I use it, I combine the thrust with the elevation of the casting arm and pointing of the rod directly at my "target".

This is well depicted in a 1992 video called, "Casting With Lefty Kreh" by Gary Borger. It is also well described in Gary Borger's book, *Presentation*, pp. 239 - 241, and in Jason Borger's, *The Nature of Fly Casting*, pp. 235 - 236.

NOTE OF CAUTION: I don't teach this technique to casters who have not reached to point of good rod and line control, because of danger of elbow damage.

To make a shoot for a distance bow-and-arrow cast, place the line coils on the ground or skiff deck **outside the rod tip** (rather than between the reel and the stripper guide). Make an exaggerated pull back with the line hand. Then a wrist flip to yield a bit of quick rod arc and follow this with a forward thrust as you release line.

Tips of Fly Lines for Shooting:

8

Keeping our fly lines clean can make a big difference. Different line surface finishes as well.

Fly line core material chosen to work best in different climates and with selected stretch can help.

Thinner running line works better on the shoot.

Fly line surface geometry can make a difference, too like fly lines which are super slick, those with longitudinal grooves (Airflo "Ridge lines") and lines about to hit the market with matt finish, raised,

“bumps” and the SA “Sharkskin” finish, etc, etc.

Make the longest cast you are likely to need. Reel up any more line out of the rod than that. Whether you use loops in the river, coiled line in a stripping basket or line on the ground or the deck of a skiff this will go a long way to prevent tangles when you shoot line or, for that matter, in the event a fish tears off at blinding speed after the hookup.

More line out of the rod than you are going to need is a liability in another way. Lefty has demonstrated that when you repeatedly cast less line than you have out, that this contributes to twists in the line which can build up to the point where this can be a cause of tangles on the shoot.

Whenever you change positions in a skiff (say from the bow to the stern), avoid dragging your coiled line to the new position. Best way to do this is to simply make an easy downwind cast and then move to the new position and retrieve there.

Under actual fishing conditions, the weight and size of the fly and the length of the leader will make a difference in the amount of line carried just prior to the shoot. In any case, your shoot will be more efficient if you do not try to carry more line than you can efficiently handle with well controlled tight loops combined with high loop speed. If you go beyond this, your shoot will suffer.

2010 FCFF Board Elected

by Jason Sheasley

As Past-President, the task befell to me to coordinate selection of the First Coast Fly Fishers 2010 Board of Directors. Thankfully, I was not alone in this task. Dick Choate and Woody Huband assisted in vetting this year's slate of candidates. The nominees were announced and approved at the October meeting.

On behalf of the nominating committee, I am please to announce the FCFF 2010 Board of Directors:

- **President** - Rob Benardo
- **VP Programs** - Dennis Holt
- **VP Outings** - Ernest Mancill
- **Treasurer** - John Adams
- **Secretary** - Brad Bravo
- **Membership** - Seth Nerke
- **Education** - Bart Isaac
- **Librarian** - Troy James
- **Banquet** - Don Edlin
- **At Large** - Jim Fallon and Ken Nimnich

I would like to thank the members of the 2010 Board for volunteering their time and service and wish them much success in the upcoming year. and I would like to extend to the 2010 Board.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the Nominating Committee for all their help.



*Something good
is about to happen*

www.blackflyoutfitter.com



**FISH
HARD
FISH
WELL**

The **Salty FEATHER**

St. Johns River Guidebook Now Available!

*GET YOUR FEET WET – A guide to the St. Johns River
Begin your journey exploring your St. Johns River!*

Use your guidebook to:

- Explore parks and places along the river.
- Identify plants and animals that you encounter.
- Engage in fun outdoor games and activities.
- Learn about the ecology and history of the St. Johns.



stjohnsriverkeeper.org



http://stjohnsriverkeeper.org/river_guidebook.asp