

FIRST COAST FLY FISHERS

FEBRUARY 2013



February Meeting

Monday February 4, 2013 at 7 PM

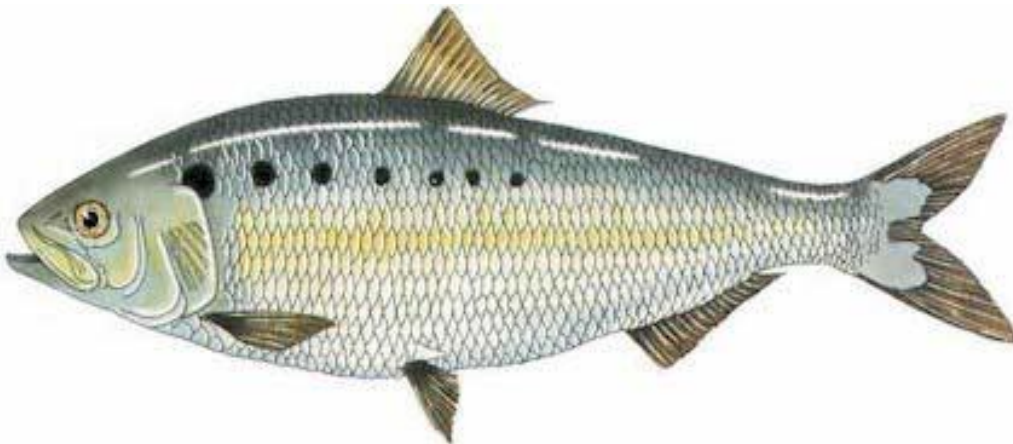
Speaker: *Ried Hyle, FWC*

Topic: *Shad Spawning in the St. Johns River*

Join us on Monday, February 4, 2013 as we welcome fisheries biologist Ried Hyle to the First Coast Fly Fishers. Reid works as a researcher with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission. He holds a Master's Degree from the College of William and Mary and specializes in the spawning habits of shad in the St. Johns River. He recently co-authored a paper on *The Spawning Run of Blueback Herring in the St. Johns River*, which is available on the [FWC's Website](#). The paper summarizes efforts to examine the population, size, distribution, male to female ratio and feeding habits of the blueback herring. The report findings indicated that spawning occurred as far upstream as 250 river miles. Every year numerous fisherman flock to the upper reaches of the St. Johns River to catch shad as they make their way back to their spawning grounds. With his knowledge and experience, Ried will be providing a unique perspective on shad and their annual spawning run.



If you haven't done so already, you can renew your Club membership and sign up for this year's annual banquet.



On the Cover:

Don Edlin's photograph was inadvertently missing from last month's article on the 2013 FCFF Board of Directors, so this month Don graces our cover. Don will once again serve on the Board as Treasurer for 2013.

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rkeurley@yahoo.com

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programs@fcff.org

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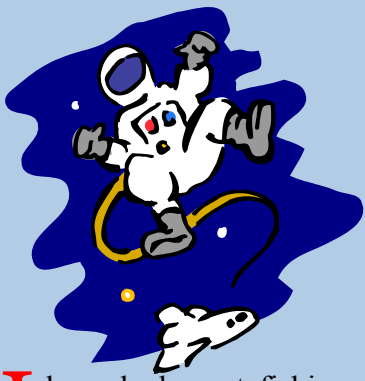
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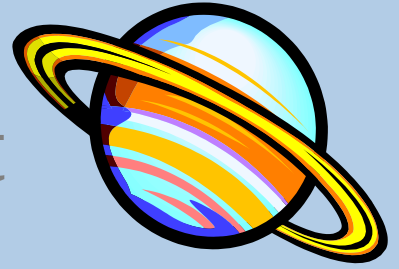
Newsletter
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FIRST COAST FLY
FISHERS
PO BOX 16260
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Space Coast Fishing Report

By Capt. Bill Sherer



I have had great fishing recently locally in the Lagoons, Redfish and Speckled Seatrout have been eager to take my flies, they have been up in the shallow flats every morning feeding heavily on Glass Minnows and Shrimp in and around the sand holes everywhere I have been. These fish are not push-overs, but they are taking a fly well and there are plenty of opportunities every morning and even more tailing fish in the evenings. If we're lucky enough to get a cloudy day there are some fish that will be feeding and take a fly all day long. The fishing has been very consistent, but it is limited mostly to Redfish and Speckled Seatrout, for those who want a change of pace you have to travel a bit farther south where populations of Snook, Snappers, Jacks, and other fishes are more abundant.

I love fishing the Sebastian area for these fish, it is great, we have been catching good numbers of Snook, Ladyfish, and Jacks, but just like most anglers, I'm always on the look out for something a little better, or just a change of pace.

A few days ago, my brother Joe and I went about 2 hours south to the Stuart area. In the past we have caught good numbers of Snook in the Loxahatchee River, one of the main arteries leading from Lake Okechobee which lies to the west. This time we went closer to the ocean and fished in the Great Pocket and Peck Lake, both known as very good fisheries. Water tem-



peratures this year have been much higher than in past winters and we think many Snook have not migrated upstream into the warmer river waters as they have in other years, we were counting on finding good fishing conditions near the St. Lucie Inlet.

We put in at the Jimmy Graham Park Landing, it gave us excellent access to the Great Pocket and Peck Lake as well as the ICW Channel which connects Hobe Sound to the incoming waters of the Inlet. There are many side channels, coves, and canals in close proximity to the landing which saved us the time of running a long distance to our target area, we were hopeful of our success.

This was a scouting mission, we were cautiously optimistic about our success and we hedged our bets by arriving early on what should be an excellent Full Moon day, we also planned on fishing some dock lights later that evening. The down side is it's Saturday and we knew the waterway would be busy with lots of other anglers and boaters.

We got on the water at 7:00 in the morning, just after sunrise and a full hour before high tide, we knew the water would still be running in keeping the fish on the feed, but far back into the Mangroves in the upper end of the channels and canals. We headed north along the ICW Channel about half a mile to a likely looking side channel about 300 yards long harboring a big sickle shaped island before it dumped back into the ICW, it looked



Space Coast cont.

promising.

Beginning at the north end we began fishing with the incoming tide. I had a fresh supply of 1/0 Skeleton Flies, a pattern which the Snook love farther north, hopefully they would like them here also. Joe was in the bow casting a 9 weight Hardy with a Cortland Intermediate Striper line and a 3 foot leader with 18 inches of 30 pound test hard mono bite tippet, overhanging Mangroves were everywhere with lots of brush in the water, it looked like prime water.

Within four casts Joe was fast onto a good fish, the "line side" exploded on the fly as it cleared the canopy. Immediately the feisty Snook was airborne slashing at the taunt line with his rakers trying to cut it, but the 30 pound hard held its ground and within a few minutes we landed our first good looking fish. We were pumped, my hours of planning and studying maps had paid off. As far as we were concerned, we already had a great day and it was only beginning!

We slowly worked our way farther down the channel, at it's apex we found an incoming tidal creek with a nice pocket where it met the channel, Joe fired a cast well back into it toward the creek mouth. Almost as soon as the fly hit the water, it was devoured by another good looking Snook, we were really into it now and my 3 1/2 inch Sliver/Gray Skeleton flies were the ticket!

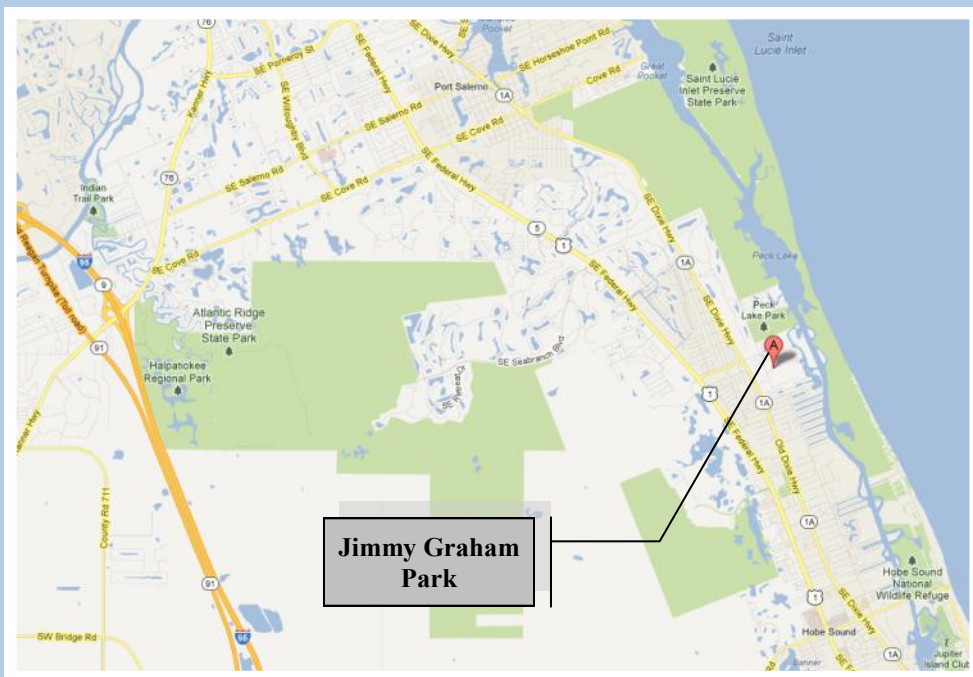
As we came to the end of the channel where it hit the main ICW, (Intra Coastal Waterway), a huge snag of trees with thick trunks and lots of smaller branches in the water was on the corner, it was prime Snook country, but I would need a weedless fly to get into that mess. Luckily I had made a few Skeletons with my famous Red Wire Weed Guards and I had one on my line. I fired a cast into the snag and slowly began stripping it back, nothing. I cast again a few feet farther down

and again wiggled the fly gingerly through the twisted bunch of limbs, still, no takers. We rounded the corner into the ICW and I put a cast well back into the mess, all the way to the shore, I wasn't expecting the fly to come through it easily, but I was willing to give it a shot. The secret of working the wire weed guarded flies is to work them slowly so the weed guard does not trip prematurely.

The fly cleared the huge mass of branches and logs, it was down deep, at least 3 feet, I gave it a short, quick escape strip, a pause and a longer slower strip - BAM - I got slammed by a nice fish flashing from deep in the wood! The strong fish immediately turned and headed back into the thick cover, but I was already on it and my Hardy Proaxis was well into turning the silvery lightning bolt into the channel where I had a good chance of landing it! The battle was on, a smart fish against a strong rod, I had one chance to get it right. The fish rocketed to the surface slashing and twisting as he went airborne, what a sight! I instinctively bowed my rod as he cleared the water, a passing boat slowed to watch the show, Joe jumped for the net and I held on ready for the next run. The fish bore down and headed back toward the brush, but it was no match for the power in my Hardy and the strength of my Maxima Leader, I turned her well before she got to the safety of the wood, less than two minutes later she was in the net.

The tide had slowed to a crawl and the morning bite was over, we decided to head farther north closer to the Inlet where the water would still be running faster. We got to the Great Pocket and looked to the north end for a couple of creeks that showed up on my search on Google Earth. We set-up and started to move slowly

across the mouth of the largest one first. With water still flowing out, I thought any predator fish would be laying in the trough at the exit of the creek where it met the main channel - I was right, except for the species. On his third cast Joe hooked up with a strong fish, it didn't come to the surface but it



Space Coast cont.



pulled hard for only being about 2 feet long. Once he got it up we realized it was a Barracuda, we didn't see that one coming! What a surprise to see Cuda's so far north in the winter months, but we could deal with it, we had fun catching several more before they spooked out of the opening.

It was nearly noon and we were getting hungry and hot after several hours in the sunny skies, we headed up through a small channel into the Back-Country in search of some shade and a few concealed pockets where some Snook my lay-up. We found a secluded corner where kayakers pull up and take a trail out to the beach a few hundred yards on the other side of the Mangrove jungle. It was a beautiful setting where the canopy made a natural little cove, birds were singing and many land crabs were climbing up into the Mangrove trunks to keep away from the soon to be rising waters.

We had a leisurely lunch, enjoying the sounds, scenery, and especially a cold beer and for dessert, Dawn's famous Chocolate Chip Cookies, the day was shaping up to be really great!

No fishing trip to a new place would be complete without some sort of disaster, and this trip was no exception. When we pushed off after lunch, a Mangrove root reached out and grabbed my trolling motor, the resulting torque broke off a part of the latching mechanism making it very difficult to run the motor without it making lots of noise hitting the transom - it was not very useful back in these tight places. I was forced to pole Joe through the narrow channels and basins as we navigated throughout the Back Country. Needless to say, Joe caught several Jacks, a few smaller Snook and some more small Mangrove Snappers, while I got a work-out. It was probably good for me, but I would have rather

been on the delivery end of a fly rod!

The tide was running out pretty slow and we decided to head back into the main channel while we still had enough water to get through the narrow channels. Once out in the ICW, we took a long boat-ride south down into Hobe Sound, partially to see some more water while the tide was slow and also to recharge the batteries for the evening fishing. We scoped out some promising areas on our way down the channel. The sun was going down quickly when we turned around and headed back north, we settled in on a likely looking channel with 4 canals emerging into a nice deep side channel. By this time I had devised a plan to temporarily "fix" the trolling motor mount with some rope, it worked well enough to give us some control and still fish effectively.

In one particularly good looking spot, a rip-rap bank gave way to a nice pocket where a huge Live Oak stood along with a bunch of Mangroves and some other underbrush, the roots in the water looked like a perfect set-up for a good fish. We had changed our flies to larger patterns, Joe was using a Blue and Yellow baby Mackerel pattern while I put on a Mullet colored Craft Fur Minnow tied on a 1/0 Daiichi X-Point long shanked hook, we were still using the Intermediate lines and short Leaders in order to fish the flies deeper. I put a good cast into the end of the Rip-Rap where the water got deeper, counted the fly down about 4 seconds and then gave it a good hard escape strip followed up by a longer, slower strip. A huge shadow showed up behind the fly, it was a monster Snook in the 20+ pound class, she gave the fly a good look and then melted back into the dark shadows of the trees - rats! I tossed several more casts into the roots, but she had seen enough the first time and was not coming back - they don't get big by being dumb. In the mouth of the next channel Joe had a another big fish make a halfhearted slash at his fly, but refused to take it also, these were smart fish and not easily fooled by rookies like us, but they were still exciting to see! We decided to switch back to our Skeleton flies right there.

We managed to catch a few more Jacks and some Ladyfish along with a couple of smaller Snook as we made our way north along the channel, the water was slowing down and would soon change and begin to come back in.

Moonrise was just before sundown and I expected to get a bump on the rise as the fish began to turn on for the evening and the Full



Space Coast cont.

Moon. Right on cue, as the Moon came up over the tree tops we hit several more fish, including one more good Snook which took my fly after missing it on the first try. The fish came screaming out from under a dock and was going so fast it missed the fly, I paused, the fish practically turned itself inside out as it reloaded and slammed me on the second strike, in the calm waters of the evening, it was spectacular to watch!

Once the sun set we went on the hunt for some good "Snook lights" along the many docks that dotted the shoreline, it didn't take long to find some, but not many Snook were under the lights. I think they were waiting for the moon to get higher in the sky and we were get-

ting eaten alive by a swarm of "No-See-Um's", of course we did not bring any insect repellent, we decided not to hang around for the last dance.

I have never seen so many bugs at this time of the year down here before! I now have a good supply of bug dope in my tackle bag. It was dark by the time we got to the landing, but it is well lit, it was no trouble at all to get the boat on the trailer, get our gear stowed and back on the road for the two hour drive back to Titusville. We were satisfied, but not overwhelmed by the fishing, perhaps we were expecting more, still it was our first try and we caught some nice fish, even on a Saturday. Every angler we talked to that day had caught some fish, we'll come back here again, but as good as this sounds, I still like the upstream waters of the Loxahatchee better for Snook action!

2013 OUTINGS SCHEDULE

Jeff Bivins has finalized this year's outing schedule. In 2013 there will be several excellent opportunities to fish new and familiar waters.

- February 2:** Shad Outing
- March 9:** Rodman Reservoir (This outing may include opportunities for camping)
- April TBD:** Casting Clinic with Dave Lambert and Rich Santos
- May 18:** Lott's Annual Fish Fry
- June 15:** Clapboard Creek for redfish (0.3 low tide at 7:19 AM)
- July TBD:** Multi-Day Stuart trip for Snook
- August 17:** Cedar Point Redfish in the grass (5.4 high tide at 6:18 PM)
- September 21:** Palm Valley Redfish in the grass (5.7 high tide at 12:45 PM)
- October 19:** Cedar Point Redfish in the grass (5.9 high tide at 9:33 AM)
- November 16:** Sisters Creek Redfish and Trout (0.2 low tide at 1:23 PM)
- December TBD:** Mosquito Lagoon or Everglades

If you have any questions contact Jeff at:
outings@fcff.org



Photo by Woody Huband



February 16
6:00 PM

FCFF

Annual Banquet

The 2013 First Coast Fly Fishers Annual Banquet is scheduled for **Saturday, February 16, 2013**. The banquet will be held at the Southpoint Marriott at Butler Boulevard and I-95. Our Guest Speaker will be **Dr. Aaron Adams**.

Dr. Adams holds Master's and Ph.D. degrees in marine and environmental science, in addition to a Captain's license, and has studied marine fish ecology throughout his professional career. He is Director of Operations for [Bonefish & Tarpon Trust](#), as well as a Senior Scientist at Mote Marine Laboratory. In addition to his duties as Director, he also continues his research interests, typically in these topics: juvenile habitat identification; juvenile survival, diet, and movements; impacts of human-caused habitat alterations; juvenile-to-adult life stage connections; adult movement patterns; age and growth. He also invests considerable effort translating fish ecology into layman's terms so that it can be better applied to conservation. He is author of '*Fisherman's Coast*', wrote four chapters for Chico Fernandez's '*Fly-Fishing for Bonefish*', has written numerous articles for fly fishing magazines, and has given many seminars on fish ecology for anglers in numerous venues. He is also



an avid fly angler.

Banquet Chairman Ken Nimmich is in the process of finalizing the details of the banquet. Details will be available at the December meeting. If you would like to volunteer to help Ken with the banquet email him at knimmich@comcast.net.

Banquet Raffle

This year's banquet will include several thousand dollars in fly fishing auction and raffle items; including fly rods, reels, guide trips and fly fishing art work and other fly fishing essentials. More items are being added every week. Raffle tickets are \$5 a piece, and five for \$20.

Grand Prize Drawing

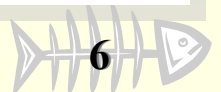
The Grand Prize Raffle this year is for a new Tibor Back Country Wide Reel. (a \$500 value). Memberships paid in full by the February 1, 2010 meeting will receive a Grand Prize Raffle ticket. One Grand Prize Raffle ticket per membership (family).

For More Information...

For more information contact Banquet Director Ken Nimmich at knimmich@comcast.net or Ryan Curley at rkcurely@yahoo.com. Additional information is also available on our web site - www.fcff.org




TIBOR REELS
The World's Finest Fly Reels



THE SHART

BY BART ISAAC

Editors Note: The Shad are in the St Johns. Bart's creation, which has been recently tested, is an easy tie for this month's shad outing.

For the last few years, I've been using the same flies (shad darts) for catching Shad. My usual fly was just a #6 hook, small nickel plated lead eyes, a flash tail and a body wrapped with Estaz or chenille in chartreuse, pink or orange.

I was in Michael's Craft Store recently and started to wonder the isles looking for potential fly tying material. I had shad flies in mind so I was looking for bright colors. My attention was grabbed by the Scribbles 3D shirt paint. I have experimented with this material before making crab flies and I remember that it held up well in the water. I had some of the shirt paint at home but I grabbed a few interesting colors and headed home to experiment.

First, I tied a few materials to the hook shank before adding the color. I used white 210 denier thread to attach a flash tail and large size bead chain eyes. The second and final step is to squeeze the paint onto the hook. I use a bodkin to smooth things out. The material shrinks when it dries. Therefore, put quite a bit on the shank. It only takes a few hours to dry, but tie them at least the day or evening before you make a trip for shad.

The pattern needs more testing but I'm really happy with how quickly it sinks and it has the easy casting characteristics of bead chain.

MATERIALS

- Hook:** Mustad 34007, #6 (or smaller)
- Thread:** White waxed 210 denier
- Eyes:** Large Bead chain
- Tail:** Pearl Flashabou
- Body:** Colored Scribbles 3D Shirt Paint in your choice of bright colors



GUESS WHO



How well do you know your fellow First Coast Fly Fishers? A native of the Gulf Coast, the strapping young boy on the left, shown here with his brother, would eventually grow up to become a Board Member of the FCFF. When he isn't catching redfish he regularly travels to western North Carolina to apply his skill toward brook and rainbow trout.

Think you know who he is? Email your guess to the Newsletter Editor by Sunday, February 10th. The winning guess will be given five free raffle tickets for this year's annual banquet. In the event that more than one member guesses correctly, the member's name will be placed in a FCFF hat and the winner will be drawn at random.



Photo by Woody Huband



PHOTOGRAPHS FROM CAPT. RICH SANTOS' RECENT SHAD OUTING ON THE ST JOHNS RIVER AT GENEVA. THEY NETTED EIGHT SHAD OVERALL. WHILE THE SHAD WERE NOT OVERLY COOPERATIVE, THE BASS, BREAM AND CRAPPIE WERE. THE BASS, BREAM AND SHAD WERE CAUGHT ON CRAZY CHARLIE BONEFISH FLIES IN CHARTREUSE AND ORANGE WITH GOLD FLASH. ACCORDING TO RICH, THE ORANGE AND GOLD PATTERNS WORKED BEST.



FLY CASTING LESSONS MADE SIMPLE!

WITH FFF VIRTUAL GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

BY CAPT. RICH SANTOS, CCI
[HTTP://WWW.FLYFISHIAX.COM/](http://www.flyfishiax.com/)

Editors Note: This article makes use of Flash Player illustrations prepared by the Federation of Fly Fishers to demonstrate the five casting essentials. To make use of the graphics in conjunction with this article you must be connected to the internet and have Flash Player (<http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>) installed on your computer. Click the images in the article with your computer's cursor and illustration should open up through your internet browser. If you are not connected to the internet, the web address for the illustrations are provided after each image.

I think of two important factors that really matter when I cast a fly rod and line. They are extremely critical when delivering the fly so it gets to the target.

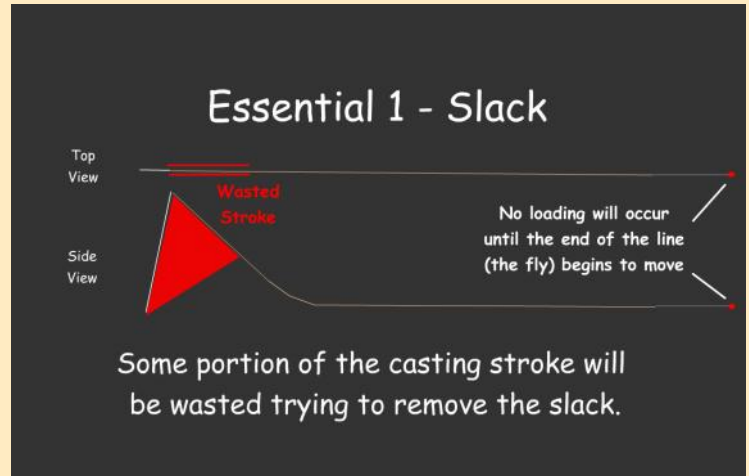
The first is how well you can load the rod during the full length of your casting stroke. Rod loading or bending is caused by the amount of smooth and gradual acceleration and power you apply coupled with the weight and mass of the fly line that resists against the rod tip. Hauling will also help you more with loading the rod deeper for more power and line speed to achieve long distances.

The second is the shape of your loop as the fly line unrolls. Your loop is the vehicle that drives the fly line forward to your target. The path of your rod tip within your casting stroke is most responsible for the shape of your loop. The loop shape and path of the rod tip may need to vary depending on your fishing situations and type fly.

To master the factors mentioned above there are (5) five basic Casting Essentials that you must remember and practice. All 5 works together to achieve the cast. I recommend that you first focus on each one separately while practicing and put them together as you go along. The essentials are as follows:

1. The Elimination of Slack Line:

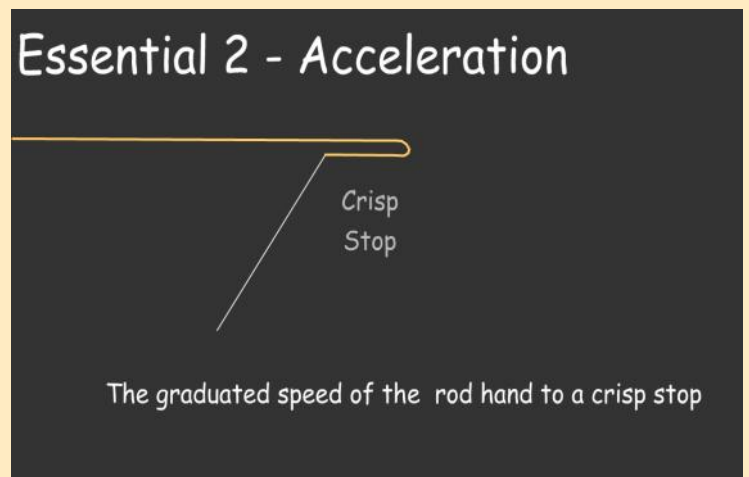
This is critical for keeping your rod fully loaded throughout the full casting stroke.



http://www.virtualflycasting.com/Graphics/Flash/5E_Slack.swf

2. Proper Acceleration of the Fly Rod:

You must have a continuously smooth speed up throughout the casting stroke with the power phase beginning at 90 degrees from the target then to an abrupt stop.

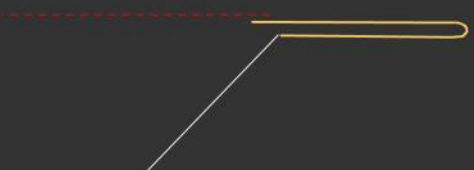


http://www.virtualflycasting.com/Graphics/Flash/5E_Acc.swf

3. Straight Line Path of the Rod Tip:

It's critical to form a narrow loop. Straight Line Path combined with the rod tip dropping slightly at the end of the casting stroke results in a narrow loop. This will travel further, have better accuracy and control and be less wind resistant.

Essential 3 - SLP




Efficient loop formation requires the caster to move the rod tip in a nearly STRAIGHT LINE PATH to the target.

http://www.virtualflycasting.com/Graphics/Flash/5E_SLP.swf

Essential 4 - Casting Stroke

Long Line

Long Stroke



The size of the CASTING STROKE is determined by the length of the line to be cast.

4. Your Casting Stroke


Varies with the length of line being casted.

http://www.virtualflycasting.com/Graphics/Flash/5E_Arc.swf

5. Pause

Pause

Pause



There must be a PAUSE that may vary in duration at the end of each back cast and forward cast stop.

Good timing is critical and will also vary depending on length of line casted.

YOUR LOOP IS THE VEHICLE THAT DRIVES THE FLY LINE FORWARD TO YOUR TARGET. THE PATH OF YOUR ROD TIP WITHIN YOUR CASTING STROKE IS MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SHAPE OF YOUR LOOP.

<http://www.virtualflycasting.com/Graphics/Flash/Pause.swf>

For more details and explanation go to:

<http://www.virtualflycasting.com/essentials.htm>

Some Final Comments and Tips:

One of the biggest issues I see with students after taking lessons is they do understand the 5 basic essentials needed for good casting mechanics but fail to immediately incorporate them into their casting style. I blame this on old muscle memory which will take time to overcome. If you remember the 5 essentials while practicing the old bad habits will eventually change. Practice should be in your backyard or in a park so you can concentrate on your casting. Again focus on one casting essential at a time for best learning and results.

Also another major issue is rod selection. You must consider the rods action type vs. casting style and your capabilities. They must be matched properly to achieve good casting form and mechanics for your body type. The faster the rod action the better reflexes and coordination you must have.

I believe that the backcast is 75% responsible to achieve a good forward cast. As a beginner you should always watch your back cast to see what is going on until you have the feel.

Use your shoulder and body more to cast the rod than wrist and elbow.

Most of the casting faults I have observed are:

1. Floppy wrist causing wide open loops. Rod tip not in a straight line path
2. Lack of line speed and rod loading which introduces slack.
3. An erratic application of power



ORDER NOW

FCFF SHIRTS



The perfect gift for the fly fisher in your life!

Sport Tek, 100% polyester Dri Mesh Performance long sleeve shirts are now available for \$30 a piece. These shirts come in a variety of colors with an image of a Clouser Minnow and “The tug is the drug” on the left front breast and the FCFF logo on the back.

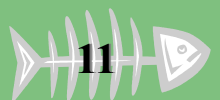
The Club hopes to be able to offer button-down shirts in the near future. More information about these shirts should be available at the September meeting.

If you are interesting in purchasing one of these performance shirts so that you can be the envy of the grass flats, contact Don Edlin by phone **904-261-4065**, or by email dpedlin@comcast.net. When ordering, Don will need to know your shirt size and the color you want.

When you place your order, be sure to thank Don for coordinating everything.



This Shirt is Guaranteed to Catch Fish!



February Outing

Shad on the St Johns River

February 1 and 3, 2013

This month, the First Coast Fly Fishers will be joining the Backcountry Flyfishing Association to fish for shad on the St Johns River.

Location: St Johns River, Near Mullet Lake Park
932 Indian Hammock Drive
Osteen, FL 32164

Dates: Starts 1 PM Friday February 1st
Ends 1 PM Sunday February 3rd

Contact: Jeff Bivins
outings@fcff.org

The Club has been invited to camp on private property that belongs to a friend of the Backcountry Flyfishing Association. The property consists of a large open field on the River. Camp sites are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Tents and small trailers are welcome. Camping is primitive, there are no utility or water hook-ups on-site. However, restroom facilities with running water are located nearby. You are asked to refrain from using generators.

Folks with large trailers and RVs will have to make arrangements with:

Lemon Bluff Camp Ground
949 Lemon Bluff Road
Osteen, FL 32764
407-322-1279

Small grills for cooking may be brought. There will be one community fire pit. Wood will be provided.

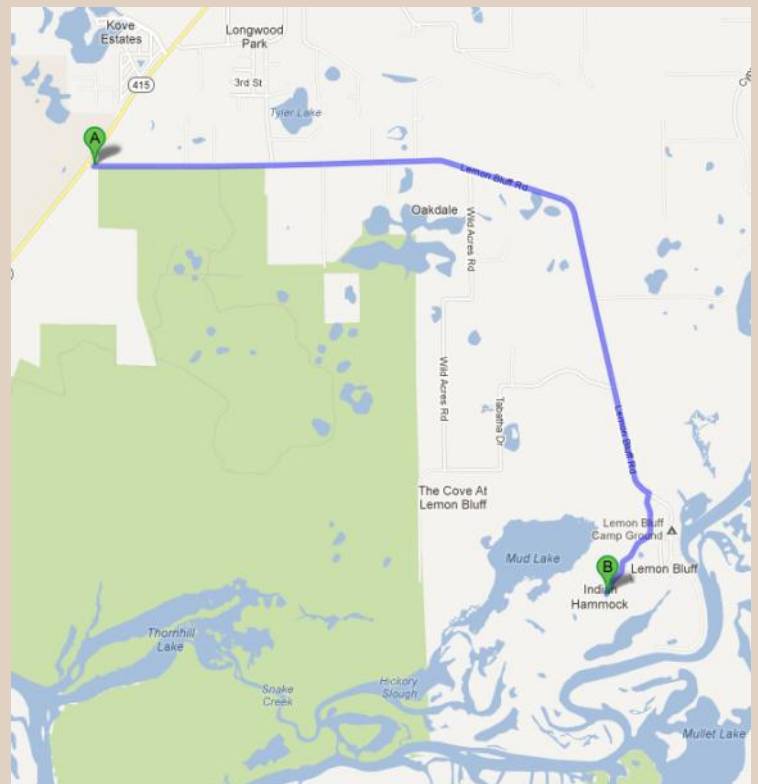
Be sure to bring big spray

Trash cans will be available around the camping area. Please bring a few trash bags just in case.

Before leaving campers must return the property back to the way they found it when they arrived. Please be considerate of the owner who has graciously allowed us to use his property.

Directions from Jacksonville

1. Head south on I-95
2. Take exit 249B to merge onto FL-44 West toward Deland
3. After 5 miles turn left onto FL-415 South
4. Stay on FL-415 South approximately 14.5 miles then turn left onto Lemon Bluff Road
5. Turn right onto Indian Hammock Drive.
6. Follow Indian Hammock Road until it dead ends into a pasture. Look for Backcountry Flyfishing Association signs.



Shad Outing....Frequently Asked Questions and Other Things to Know

The outing is free to FCFF Members-In-Good-Standing.

Traditional fishing methods are either by slow trolling or drift casting, i.e. casting upriver and letting the lure drift with the current. This is effective for locating the shad before fly fishing. Shad can be sensitive to colors. Varying colors can often improve results.

The male shad is an excellent game fish, showing multiple jumps and an occasional end-over-end; it has been called a "freshwater tarpon". The pregnant female does not fight much, but in the past was often kept for the roe. Today most people practice catch and release but there is still a bag limit of 10.

You are recommended to have a freshwater and saltwater license when shad fishing on the St. Johns.

What Flies to use?

Think small (less than 1-1/2" inches) and flashy. It is good to have several weights to accommodate different depth and current conditions.

Streamers - Others patterns, like flashy streamers, are more useful in times of drought, and/or when the shad have migrated to the headwaters of the river (Hatbill Park and Puzzle Lake areas, e.g.), where the shad may congregate and behave like spawning salmon. Sometimes, the water depth may be only one to three feet, so the flies are fished with a floating line. There are also those times when the shad will be active near the surface even in deeper water, and these flashy patterns can be fished quite effectively on floating, sink-tip or slow-sinking fly lines in the usually dark, tannic waters of the river.

Colors - As far as my choice of colors, I prefer crystal flash, pink, or tan flies. Other club members recommend pearl white, red, pink, chartreuse and purple colors, with pearl or silver versus gold flash. It would also be appropriate to have some more subdued patterns (with little or no flash) in case the shad seem to be repelled by flashy flies. I think that they will generally hit most small flies when they are active.

In deep water, casting techniques (for example, using the S- or wiggly cast; aerial mend) can be used to intro-

To paraphrase a deceased patriot, I regret that I have only one life to give to my fly-fishing.
-Robert Traver

duce slack into the line, allowing the fly to sink faster. Line mending techniques (feeding line out; mending the line in a down-current direction) may reduce drag, allowing a fly to sink faster or drift more naturally. Getting the fly deeper may increase hookups on the "swing" as well as during fly retrieval against the current. Upstream casting may be necessary in shallow and narrow sections of the river. This requires skills in casting, mending and retrieving the fly in order to impart fly action, to get the fly to the proper depth and to detect strikes.

Fishing the flies - The key to consistently catching shad is having a variety of tackle and using it properly. As shad migrate, the water conditions they encounter vary due to the dimensions and contours of the land surrounding and under the river. These conditions are altered by daily and seasonal fluctuations in rainfall, which can affect water level, color, turbidity and current strength at a given location. Therefore, a variety of fly lines and flies, used in various combinations, will allow an angler to effectively fish any location where shad may congregate/concentrate.

Boats - The closest spot to launch is the NEW AND IMPROVED Lemon Bluff boat ramp. It's about 100 yards from the turn on to Indian Hammock Dr. A map from the camp site to the ramp will be provided when you arrive.

Boats should be put back on the trailer at night and parked next to your camp site.

Note: Please be respectful of the property when pulling your trailer.

Canoes and Kayaks can be used to fish for shad. Paddlers should be experienced and use caution because many areas of the St. Johns have high speed boat traffic. If you are a paddler don't be discouraged. There are plenty of places to go. Many paddlers fish near the Econ or use their boats to get to a nice bank.

Please join us and thanking these fine guides and businesses for contributing to our 2013 Annual Banquet.

