

# FIRST COAST FLY FISHERS

MAY 2013





# May 2013 Meeting

Monday May 6, 2013 at 7<sup>PM</sup>

## 1st Annual Jim Fallon Memorial Story Night

In March the Club lost a dear friend. Jim Fallon will be greatly missed. If you spent any amount of time in Jim's company it quickly became apparent that he was the consummate story teller. Whether it was about his career as a rail-roader or his fly fishing (mis)adventures, Jim always had a story to tell. His most famous story was of the time he and Larry Holder got stuck on a sand bar at low tide. When he told his story no one laughed harder than Jim; except for maybe Larry.



Jim about to spin a tale

Join us Monday May 6th, as we hold the *First Annual Jim Fallon Memorial Story Night*. Jim wasn't the only great story teller in the Club. Monday will be your chance to get up and regale the members with your best fish story. You will have 10 minutes to tell us your best fishing story. At the end of the night we will vote on the best story. The member with the best story will win a gift certificate to **Black Fly Outfitters**.

Got a great story and want to be included on the dais for story night, email Seth Nehrke at [nehrkesm@gmail.com](mailto:nehrkesm@gmail.com). In the instance of time, those folks who email Seth will be given precedence.

If your storytelling skills are a little rusty, or if you need some inspiration, check out the following link for the Ted Channel - [http://www.ted.com/playlists/62/how\\_to\\_tell\\_a\\_story.html](http://www.ted.com/playlists/62/how_to_tell_a_story.html)

The Club will provide sandwiches and drinks. So come hungry and look forward to some great storytelling.

### On the Cover:

Fresh from April's Casting Clinic Rosemarie Panella Abad with her second fish on the fly. (Her first was a Belizean bonefish)

### First Coast Fly Fishers 2013 Officers and Board

#### President

Ryan Curley

[rkcurely@yahoo.com](mailto:rkcurely@yahoo.com)

#### VP Programs

Seth Nehrke

[programs@fcff.org](mailto:programs@fcff.org)

#### VP Outings

Jeff Bivins

[outings@fcff.org](mailto:outings@fcff.org)

#### Treasurer

Don Edlin

#### Secretary

Mike Harrigan

#### Membership

Scott Shoiber

#### Education

Bart Isaac & Buddy Price

#### Librarian

Richard Clark

#### Banquet

Ken Nimmich

#### At-Large

Rich Santos

Buddy Price

#### Newsletter

Jason C. Sheasley

FIRST COAST FLY  
FISHERS  
PO BOX 16260  
JACKSONVILLE, FL32245-6260

# The Journey is Better than the Inn

By Chan Ritchie

Yesterday I caught a large bass that has outsmarted me for several weeks. She ruled my friend Paul's small artesian-well fed pond, the Barn Pond. I placed her there as a fingerling 5 or 6 years ago. Heck, it could have been 8 years ago? Time flies by so fast these days.

Now she is, as they said in the 80's, *A hog*. She has been devouring everything in the gin-clear water-except for the well-fed 30 inch catfish and 40 inch carp.

Paul is not a fisherman so he asked me to catch the big girl and return her to his 5 acre lake. *No sweat*, I boasted. I cut my teeth chasing bass in the vast, wild cypress bayous that make up the ancient Mobile River Delta. I have every bass lure imaginable. I figured to make short work of her. However, as the weekends came and went she continued to turn a blind eye to everything I chunked her way. I became a man on a mission, making 5 or 6 trips for the sole purpose of putting a hook in her jaw.

Last Sunday I pulled out a 35 year-old Cotton Cordelle Spot crank-bait that has sat lonesome in my tackle box since about 1979. I spied her laid up basking in the sun at edge of a brush pile not 6 feet from my toes. I silently pitched out the Cordelle and pulled it right into her face. She nailed it! Instantly she was airborne and tail-walking. Her massive head seemed to be in slow motion as it swung from side to side like the giant tarpon filmed in Curt Goudy's *American Sportsman* a generation ago. I am not exactly sure how long it took her to throw the hooks because I blinked.

More determined than ever, I went back four evenings in a row. I tried top water, plastic worms and lizards, spinner-baits, Jig-n-pigs, and a multitude of flies...and finally the world's most reliable fish catcher, the revered green Beetle Spin. The way she snubbed me you would have thought I had asked her to dance! No matter what line I used her answer was still NO!

As much as it pained me I decided that it was time to return to my roots. As a yearling boy my very first wall-hanger bass fell to the irresistible death-struggle of a small beam impaled on a large hook. I wondered if it would work again after more than 40 years of water has gone over the dam.

I jerked a beautiful orange and yellow sun-perch from the

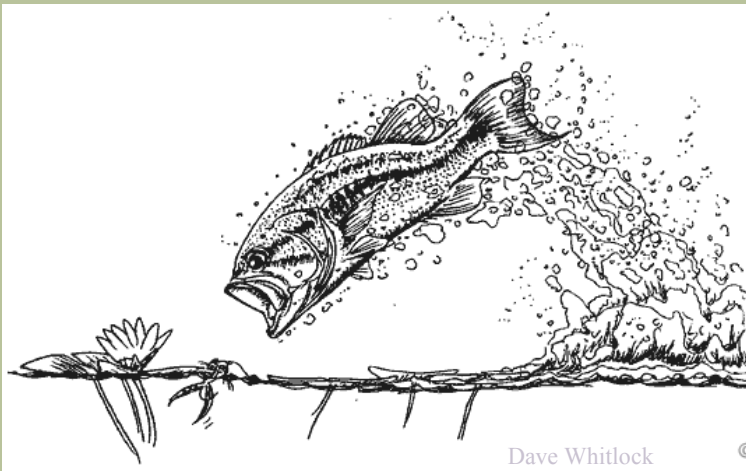
big lake and skewered the little guy onto a large live bait hook. I then searched the Barn Pond for the she-hog. I could not locate her for a sight-cast so I just tossed the bait into the middle of the pond. Literally within 3 seconds of the bream hitting the water my eye caught a flash and I saw her charging the length of the pond like a guided torpedo. She crashed the bait at full speed nearly yanking the rod from my hands. The drag was instantly screaming as Spiderwire squealed through the guides! My heart-rate was tail-walking by the time she broke the surface. I began to shout adrenalin-filled orders at her as though she would listen to reason- *GET THAT HEAD DOWN!! NO NO NO YOU DON'T! STAY OUT OF THAT BRUSH YOU B#%& CH! TURN THAT HEAD DAMN YOU!!! COME ON BABY! COME ON! COME TO DADDY!! TURN THAT HEAD!!*

I got her turned my way and quickly yanked her up out of the water like the tournament anglers do. As my heart raced I pinned her down with my knees and took hold of her jaw. I held her up and surveyed my prize. I quickly removed the hook and took off toward the big lake. I knelt down and eased her into her new home. For a moment she just sat, her pectoral fins undulating. Then with a flash of her mighty tail she was gone, the small swirl of silt she left in her wake was the final chapter of this quest. As I rose to my feet it hit me that I would miss her. Our daily chess match was over.

The 16<sup>th</sup> century novelist and poet Cervantes wrote that the journey is better than the Inn. Meaning that the things we experience along the way are often more fulfilling than the attainment of that which we are seeking. I have found this to be the case for me on more than one occasion during my years afield.

This morning I awoke and found that the enthusiasm of the last few evenings has died. The goal now achieved, I seem to regret my success. Maybe Cervantes was right. Maybe the journey is better than the Inn.

I am going to be more careful about what I wish for and I will make darned sure the barb is mashed down on every hook I own. Just one more shake of that big jaw and maybe, just maybe the game would still be on. Kinda makes you wonder- Maybe there is a good reason that the big ones usually get away?





# Two-Handed Strips for Tarpon, with Andy Mill

By Marshall Cutchin

*Editor's Note: Marshall Cutchin is the founder and publisher of Midcurrent. He recently granted FCFE permission to reprint his interview with renown tarpon fisherman Andy Mill.*

**Marshall Cutchin:** We are talking to today with Andy Mill, who is widely considered one of the most successful tarpon fishermen of all time. He's won most of the major tournaments and really changed the sport by applying techniques for tarpon fishing that people were not using or they hadn't fully explored in the past. We're going to talk about some of the techniques that he's popularized and made famous today. Thanks Andy.

**Andy Mill:** Well it's an honor and a privilege Marshall, thank you. It's a nice introduction as well. I wish I could say that about my skiing career, but one career is better than none, right?

**MC:** That's a second conversation perhaps—skiing translated into fishing. We were talking earlier about some of the different techniques and comparing notes with my experience as a guide and you as a long-time angler. To start with the basics, you fish differently for ocean side fish than you do for fish in the backcountry, muddy water, laid up fish, that sort of thing. Is that right?

**AM:** With a two-handed strip and the new worm methodology, yes. Let's clarify one thing here: I think the most important thing to remember about being a successful feeder of flies to tarpon is to relate to the cat-and-string scenario. If you throw a piece of string to a kitten or a cat and you hit it on the head it's going to run away. If you as an angler throw the fly to the fish you're going to bonk him, he'll swim away. If you throw the string out of reach to the cat, a little bit too far, he won't necessarily reach out and grab it. If you get that string just within reach of the cat and bump it and shake that piece of string or yarn, that cat reaches out and grabs it with his claw. That is the same scenario with feeding tarpon with flies.

I used to fish the toad fly a lot. I used to throw it way out in front, intercept the fish. And that's real key, intercept the fish. Then closing the gap with the fly and the fish without stopping the fly; eventually that fish is going to reach out and grab that fly. That's the rule of thumb, if you will.

What I've noticed here recently, because the toad fly and cer-

tain materials flies are tied with, is that the fabric and the material of the fly works as well to help you feed that fish as does you and your methodology with stripping. With throwing a worm fly, the fabric—and there are some that use a rabbit strip—will help feed that fish.

I've found that these fish target that worm, and that just goes to show me that these fish want that worm for whatever reason beyond protein. Take a look at the biology and why all these tarpon all over the keys congregate to the bridges during the worm hatch. Why does such a big 80-150 pound beast need that worm so much? I'm almost thinking, and it's not proven yet, that it might have something to do with fertility, with protein and be related to sperm and sex and the eggs. At that time of year they're offshore in 400 feet of water spawning. It's a real important thing to these fish.

**MC:** That old folk tale that a palolo worm was an aphrodisiac was maybe pretty close to the truth?

**AM:** Whether it's an aphrodisiac, it obviously takes place around the mating cycle of these fish. I'm almost thinking that it *is* almost, it's some kind of a fertility drug, protein drug, something that really is needed in their biological system for this whole time of year.

**MC:** Interesting.

**AM:** When I really started keying in on these worm hatches with my son a couple years ago, we started fishing the worms on the flats more often. In certain areas a worm fly is really obvious to use. That is on the worm bars during that worm hatch. I'm catching fish as soon as I see them swimming in the ocean in April, late April right up through June.

When they see that worm and if you move it correctly, oh my god hang on because they're going to come take a look and most likely they're going to smash it. It's really key to their dietary focus if you will.

**MC:** A lot of people don't realize that worms don't just hatch on the ocean side too. They hatch in a lot of hard coral bottom throughout the Keys and certainly probably other parts of the world too. It is a bit of a fallacy to think that it only happens at the Seven Mile Bridge or in different places on the ocean. There are lots of different places.





**AM:** Absolutely, but the thing is about the ocean side of the Keys is that these fish are swimming in clear water. So you can see the relationship between the fly, or your worm fly and the fish a little bit more clearly than you do in the back country. That's why in the back country I'll use a fly that may stand out a little bit more in that dingy water.

What I've noticed though is that there are a lot people that are really gravitating more towards the worm, while there for about ten years it was the toad on the ocean. And I always believed that if you can become an angler to catch fish in that clear water you can catch tarpon anywhere in the world. They're the most difficult tarpon to catch.

**MC:** Yes no question. Tell us about the technique itself. I know that it involves two-handed stripping, but beyond that can you tell us the pieces, parts? The things that make it work?

**AM:** What's kind of interesting is that I noticed since David Dalu won three tournaments in one year using the double-handed strip and I used to talk to him about it. They were congregating in the bowling-alley, clear water, using worm flies. I talked to him one time and he was saying, "The two-handed strip allows me to get that bite before I yank that fly out of the fishes face when he bites it." A lot of tarpon anglers don't have the calm and collective nerve to wait for that fish to get tight in the stripping hand before they set the hook. They yank that fly right out of the water, right out of the fish's mouth.

He was saying he did it mostly just for the bite. If you take a look at any of these palolo worms in the water—you've seen this yourself—they're skirting and moving consistently. There's never a pause, there's never any sort of stage in their swimming patterns where they're still. They skirt and move continuously.

When I started fishing the worms a couple years ago, more aggressively with a little bit more of a keener eye, I noticed that if I have a fly out in front of the fish on its track—I cast a little bit long of the fish and have to wait for the fish to get



Andy demonstrating a two-handed strip

Photo by Carl Ball

up on fly—a lot of times that fish may come over and get interested and start to track it and bite it. A lot of times if they saw it sitting there and I start to slide it they would duck it. They would move off.

Once they started keying in on the worms under the moon and the worm bars and watching how they swim, I started making casts long of the fishes track. Well out in front of the fish with a good lead, but also long of that track. Then I would try to intercept that fish on its track with the fly, a worm fly that was moving. That continuous movement was really predicated upon double-handed stripping. There's no pause as you have with a single-handed strip.

**MC:** Do you think the tarpon are scanning as they're migrating up the ocean? Do you think they're scanning for moving fish?

**AM:** I don't think so. I just think they're traveling down the road. They're traveling down the road and rabbits run off to side, and there's a mullet and this and that. All of a sudden if you can get a fly, if you can get a small enough of a hook and a small enough of a fly and all of a sudden that fly is right in front of that fish's face. After about an arm's length, a little bit more, maybe 15 feet and at times maybe 20 feet and all of a sudden that worm is sliding and the fish is tracking. All of a sudden that little Snickers bar is a foot in front of that fish's face, and there's a good chance he's going to open his mouth and smash it.

You remember elephants eat peanuts. (Laughs) It's not that big, fat piece of meat that you're chucking. That's why on a big sunny day, as Steve Huff has always said, "A fly is your best bait for big tarpon." Because you can get it in front of the fish without bothering that fish. I don't think, me particularly, I don't think that they're looking for food when they're sliding down the edge but they're opportunist feeders. If all of a sudden there's something there that's going to be easy to get, he'll just sip it or he might smash it.

**MC:** You're using a constant, fairly slow retrieve intercepting the fish. You've got to be using a pretty small hook, right?



**AM:** Yes. If you have really big long lead and too big of a hook it may sink too deep in the water column. That's why I've always use the toads a lot, because that toad woven head has a tendency and the ability to float high in the water column without sinking too fast. I could wait for a fish. I can see a fish coming down the pike. I give it a big lead. Throw it out there a little bit long and slide it and wait for the fish. When I feel that he may be in the proximity of my fly to be able to see it I'll start sliding it. Depending on what that fish does then I adjust my retrieve.

That's what all good tarpon feeders do. They adjust their feed of the fly to the fish depending on the fishes' action. That's why a good tarpon fisherman can really understand the body language of the fish. That fish will tell you what it wants. You just have to be able to understand it and read it.

I think with the worm fly, if you throw that fly just shy of the fish's track and you start to retrieve it too soon he'll never see that fly. Or if you wait for the fish to get up near your fly and start to retrieve it he sees it in a stationary position before it starts to move and he won't like that. That fly being stationary is not a natural thing for a palolo worm.

**MC:** Or any kind of prey is not going to wait for a fish to be two feet away before they start to move.

**AM:** Right. Even if I got it just a little bit further. I found that if I throw it on the track of the fish with a big lead I have to wait. Again, that fly is sinking. If I throw it long of the track of the fish and I wait too long to start to retrieve and the fish gets too close—pretty soon that fish is between you and fly and you pinch that outside eye and they absolutely hate that.

If I can throw it long of the track and you start sliding a little bit. Now when the fish gets a little bit closer and he sees that worm moving, now you can adjust your strip a little bit depending on what that fish is doing. You can slow it down a little bit because it's already moving. You can slow it down just a hair and wait for that fish to come track it, get up on it. Then you can accelerate a little bit. That's the most accurate analogy or replication of that palolo worm and your fly and the fish.

The real good key thing about all this is that with a lot of people who don't do a lot of tarpon fishing, with the double-handed strip you can't yank that fly out of the fish's mouth and out of the water. As you would if you've got the fly rod in your right hand or left hand and you're single-handed stripping. When it really comes right down to it that is one of the most key elements to successfully catch tarpon: waiting for the fish to get into your stripping hand. Then when you strip-strike you are almost hand lining that hook into its face. Whereas if you rod strike as you know, the tip of the rod is so flexible there's no resistance. All you do is poke the fish and when he jumps up the fly falls out of his face.

**MC:** You and I laughed about this before, but the old technique popularized by Billy Pate and some other people of striking the fish hard is almost guaranteed to get the fly out of the fish's mouth rather than keep it in, right?

**AM:** A lot of these guys, these videos of Billy Pate see him with both hands on his cork handle striking it six, seven times the fish. The problem with that technique is that he has an anti-reverse reel with only four pounds of drag. You're striking it with the tip of a rod. You can see why a lot of times these fish fell off their hooks back then.

The real most effective way is when you get tight to a fish with your stripping hand you just hang on obviously. You just hang on and then I use my rod, the rod butt in my stomach. I bend the handle of the rod and seat that hook. It only takes a good; you just hang on to that fish a little bit and the weight of him going in the opposite direction that would drive that hook right to the bend.

**MC:** Is there ever a time to strike the fish with the rod?

**AM:** Yeah this is what I do. If I see a fish slide up on my fly, eat my fly and keep sliding towards me. All of a sudden I can't keep up with the fish because of the slack that's being created with the fish coming closer to me. You keep stripping until you can tight. Sometimes you can't get tight. What I'll do is when can't get tight is I'll rod strike and leave my rod way high above my head. When I get tight it's really not driven that hook home. All it's doing is poking the fish. What I'll do is I'll rod strike nice and high. Get the fly stuck in the fish's face. All you have in the fish is the tip of the hook. Then I stomp on the deck of the boat. When he hears me stomping he turns around and goes in the other direction. Then I lower my rod and get tight to the fish. That's the only time I'll ever rod strike. That's basically because I'm about ready to lose the connection between the fish and my fly. He's got my fly but he's swimming right at me and I can't get tight to him. You see what I'm saying?

**MC:** Sure. I think I told you the story of going for a very long streak back when I was guiding with customers who had never caught tarpon before. They caught those fish because they never struck with their rod. At the time, people were telling me that was a really silly idea but it obviously worked very well. I've continued using that same technique. I don't know that I've struck a tarpon personally in more than 20 years. I seem to have a pretty good luck.

**AM:** If you're teeing it up and shooting seven or under every round you just keep shooting seven under say I keep doing what you're doing. (Laughing) You know what I'm saying. You have to go with what works. If you take a close look at it, you don't strike a fish with the rod. You're hand lining and when you get tight to that fish, you're way tight.

The only thing here too is that with a dou-



# Two-Handed Strips

Continued

ble-handed strip when you get tight, you're basically handling the fish because the rod is either under your arm or between your knees. When you handline a fish there is no give. You have to adjust how long and how hard to hang on. You're going to pop a bunch of fish off even though you may be using 20-pound test.

There's an adjustment period there for "How do I set this fish with a hand line?" It's so strange the first time you do it because the rod is between your legs. You're not even close to your fly rod. You have a bunch of string in your hand and you're hooked up to a 100-pound fish flopping around out there.

**MC:** You keep the rod between your knees, but I've heard of people doing it under their arms. Is there any advantage to one or the other?

**AM:** Most people do it with the rod under their arm. A lot of the striper fishermen in the Northeast have been doing this. If you're out in the surf you need to have that rod up and out of the saltwater. Then when they start fishing out of boats they put it under their arm. For me, I've got to have total movement with my arms. If I lock it right between my knees, the rod is locked there and I strip with my rod between my knees; maybe just above my knees between my thighs, but low. I see people do it both ways. I've done it both ways.

Dustin Huff and I worked together the last couple years. He too likes it between his knees. I do it both ways. It depends on which is more comfortable for that individual.

**MC:** Who is the first person that you had ever heard of doing two-handed strip in the keys? As you mentioned, there may have been anglers in other parts of the country doing it or other parts of the world. Who was the first to fish tarpon with a two-handed strip as far as you know?

**AM:** As far as I know, Carl Anderson did it when he was fishing in the Gold Cup with us. He died last year— or I think it was 2010 or 2011, maybe 2012. Regardless, he was using wire with his flies because he felt when the fish bit the monofilament, especially 70- or 80-pound test, that diameter is so thick they could pinch it and the fly remained floating inside that tarpon's mouth. Then when he jumped and opened his face the fly came flying out. He would use wire for the bite getting tight to the fish. He was the first guy I knew for years that was double-handed stripping flies. He was not specifically using palolo worm flies. He was using your typical splayed-feather tarpon flies.

Then David Dalu won three tournaments in the same year using, I think, the worm fly and double-handed stripping. Since then there's a lot of people that have gravitated to it because it is so darn effective.

But I think here too it's really important not to just have a double-handed strip; but really pay attention to where you throw that fly. The double-handed strip will give you that continuous movement of the palolo worm, but it's a matter of refining where you put the fly in relationship to the speed of the fish and the track that the fish is on. Then tweaking the whole system.

**MC:** Let's just say you've got a pod of fish coming at you on sand on the ocean side. Are you throwing it five feet ahead of the fish or 30 feet ahead of the fish; beyond them in your case, because you want the fly to be moving when they see it? Is there any way to give a general idea of what we're talking about?

**AM:** It's a movement thing here: the dynamics of movement and the speed of movement. The biggest mistake people make when they tarpon fish is that they throw the fly *to* the fish. They boink them on the head, or if the fish doesn't spook the fish swims well under the fly in the water column. It's like shooting a bird. You need to lead that bird and intercept that bird with that buckshot, and the fish with the fly.

Take the risk of casting too far in front of the fish and the fly gets too low in the water column. The fish slides over it. Once you get there certain fish are sliding faster so you need a longer lead. Certain fish are a little bit more of a crawling scenario. Hell some fish are laid up and you have to use the current to get the fly to the fish. It's a matter of feeling it. I would much rather be too early than too late, too late its game over immediately. If you're a little bit early with that cast, and with too big of a lead, you might be able to wait a little bit. If you can tell it's not going to work, I'd just strip it real fast and recast.

The other thing that people have got to be careful about is—and Harry Spear taught me this a long time ago—remember the adage, "One cast one fish." Don't throw to that fish when he's a 100 feet away, or 80 feet away. You're going to not be very accurate with that cast. If he bites it and you get tight you've got 10% of stretch in the fly line. If you hook the fish 70 feet away from you've got 7 feet of stretch before it gets really tight.

**MC:** How far away would you say most of the fish are hooking on the ocean side?

**AM:** I would say most of my fish that I catch are between I would say 50 to 60 feet. 60 at the furthest, up to maybe say 15 to 20 feet away from me. I wait for that fish to get a little closer. That way when I put my fly in there it's right where I want it. I got one cast and





I'm going to get one shot. When he bites it's going to be nice and close so I can get tight and catch him.

**MC:** You have a really good idea of how far from that distance you can see almost exactly how far from that fish your fly is and what it's doing, right?

**AM:** You can watch the movement of his eyes a lot of times. You can lose your fly. That worm is so little. On a real calm day, in clear water, I'll use a 20-foot leader and my shock is like 40-pound test and I got a clear fly line. I use the Cortland Crystal, so it's all clear fly line and 20 feet of clear. Your worm is only an inch-and-a-half long. If it's slightly overcast you lose that worm. There's no way you're going to be able to see it. You have to be able to read the fish, have a gut instinct as to where that fly is. That fish will tell you where that fly is if you pay attention. A lot of times you're fishing by the seat of your pants.

At least you understand the dynamics and the movement. The boat's moving, the wind is blowing, there's some current, the fish is sliding. You put the fly out there, you start to slide it and you have a feel about the speed of the fish and where your fly is when it first hits. Then you guesstimate where everything comes together. Then if all of a sudden you see that fish start to accelerate and maybe change an angle coming towards you a little bit. Then you know you've got to get ready. He's going to smash it. It's cool. As you know, it's just the greatest game every played with a fly and

fish.

**MC:** If there weren't all those variables to take into consideration and you didn't have to in the end rely on your instincts it wouldn't be a whole lot of fun, would it? That's really the exciting part of it.

**AM:** It's hard. I'm so glad it's hard. I don't want a lot of people getting rewarded and having this kind of fun without putting in some work. (Laughing). I've worked for 30 years. If I go out there flopping fish it would be "God I'm doing all that work but this is easy. Anybody can do this." It's like making a six-inch putt.

**MC:** Andy every time I talk to you I learn something. I really appreciate you taking the time to talk to us today.

**AM:** My pleasure. I'm just glad I have this experience over the last 30 years. I feel fortunate to give something back to these guys who don't have that free time to fish 60 days a year. When they get out there I feel if I can help them with their encouragement, their excitement, and their success, I feel very fortunate to be able to do that. Thank you.

---

The original version of this interview can be found on the Midcurrent website at [http://midcurrent.com/techniques/two-handed-strips-for-tarpon-with-andy-mill/?utm\\_source=MidCurrent+Fly+Fishing+Email+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=f2897bad2d-](http://midcurrent.com/techniques/two-handed-strips-for-tarpon-with-andy-mill/?utm_source=MidCurrent+Fly+Fishing+Email+Newsletter&utm_campaign=f2897bad2d-)

## Just When You Thought It Was Safe To Go Back In The Water...

In June of last year a local fisherman caught an unusual species of fish in Illinois' Lake Lou Yeager. Originally thinking it was a piranha, the fisherman reported it to the lake's superintendent Jim Caldwell, who in turn took the fish to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, where it was identified as a pacu.

A pacu is a South American freshwater fish that is related to the piranha. Unlike the piranha, which have pointed, razor-sharp teeth, pacus have squarer, straighter teeth that are somewhat human-like. Pacus are also much larger than piranhas. They can reach up to 3 feet in length and weigh as much as 55 pounds. However, unlike the piranha, the pacu is generally considered to be a vegetarian favoring nuts, leaves and other types of aquatic vegetation. There are exceptions.

In the 1990s pacus were introduced to the Sepik and Ramu Rivers in New Guinea as a food source due to the overfishing of native species. In 2011, two New Guinea fishermen died of massive blood loss after being attacked by pacus. Apparently the fishermen were wading in the water and had

their testicles bitten off. Jeremy Wade, host of Animal Planet's River Monsters speculates that in the instance of the New Guinea pacu, they are reverting to their piranha-like carnivorous diet due to the lack of vegetation options.

Illinois officials speculate that the pacu caught in Lake Lou Yeager is likely a former aquarium fish that was dumped in the water by its owner.



**A pacu caught on the fly by Nicolas Trochine in Bolivia.**

Go to: <http://farawayflyfishing.com/argentina-fly-fishing-blog/bolivian-pacu/>





# Saturday May 18th Annual Fish Fry at the Lott's House

13795 County Road 13 North, St Augustine, FL

Consider it the First Coast Fly Fisher's prom without the bad tuxedos and cheesy 80's cover band. While you will be missing out on some wannabe Bret Michaels belting out power ballads you will have to struggle the anxiety of wondering whether or not you will get lucky.

For the past decade (maybe longer) Bill and Ann Lott have graciously opened up their St Augustine home to the FCFE for its' annual fish fry. Once again, Bill and Ann have invited the Club to enjoy a day of fishing, food and fellowship along the sylvan banks of the St Johns River on **Saturday May 18th**.

Members are encourage to bring their boats. Canoes and kayaks can be launched directly from the Lott's house. The Riverdale boat ramp is about 2 miles south of their house State Road 13. When lunch is served, there will be plenty of room to tie up on Bill and Ann's dock. If you don't have a boat there is no need to fret. There are plenty of places to wade-fish along the shoreline. John Adams will have his pontoon boat in action to deposit anglers at some of the

choice spots along the river.

Lunch will be served around 12 o'clock. If you would like to contribute fish for the fish fry, John Adams will be bringing a cooler to the May meeting. Be sure to freeze your fish in water so they stay nice and fresh.

If you are interested in bringing a covered dish or dessert, please contact Ann Lott at 904-825-1276 or [ann.lott@att.net](mailto:ann.lott@att.net).

#### Directions:

The Lott's address is 13795 County Road 13 North, St Augustine, Florida. [CLICK HERE](#) for Google Map.

#### Questions:

For questions or further information regarding the outing contact the Vice President of Outings, Jeff Bivins at [outings@fcff.org](mailto:outings@fcff.org).





# Twenty Questions with FCFF VP of Programs...

1. Where are you originally from and how long have you lived in the Jacksonville-Area?

*I was born and raised in western NY in the finger lakes region. I have lived in Jax since 2008*

2. What is your job/profession?

*I am a water resources engineer...yeah, a nerd.*

3. Tell us a little something about your family?

*I have a beautiful wife, Amy, who somehow tolerates my fishing obsession. I also have two great kids, Benny, 7, and Lilah Jane, 4.*

4. How long have you been fly fishing?

*My Father founded a Trout Unlimited chapter when I was young. I first had a fly rod in my hand at the age of 8*

5. Who are your heroes?

*I have never really been star struck. I am more impressed with people who work hard and are self sacrificing for the greater good. Oh, and Isaac Newton...those three laws of motion are pretty much the building blocks of engineering. And Henry Darcy, the law of continuity, ( $Q=VA$ ) really is the start of how fluids work. Did I mention I was a nerd?*

6. Where is your favorite place to fish?

*There is something about being isolated from it all with just you, your crew, and the fish. I would love to explore some of the tropical ecosystems, but locally - Deep in the Everglades*

7. With what person (living or dead) would you like to spend a day on the water?

*I would like to have another day with my dad. Unfortunately he passed before my kids were born, and*



*Seth Nehrke*

*I'd love to let them meet him and get to build some fishing memories*

8. Aside from the obvious (rod, reel and flies) what piece of fly fishing gear do you consider essential to have with you on the water?

*Have to be polarized glasses. If you can't see the fish it is hard to catch the fish! And nippers, which is supported by four out of five dentists!*

9. What is your "go-to" fly?

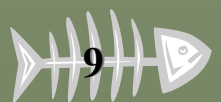
*I like black, and I like purple. I typically fish a marabou booger in black or black and purple!*

10. What is your favorite fish to catch on a fly rod.

*Tarpon. Hands down.*

11. What is your bucket list fish i.e., what fish haven't you caught on a fly rod but would like to do so?

*I would love to catch a rooster fish. Ever since seeing "Running Down the Man" I have visions*





12. Who are your favorite writers?

*Sci-Fi sword and sorcery. I knew Game of Thrones LONG before it was cool!*

13. What is on your iPod (i.e. what kind of music do you listen to)?

*Alternative rock. I like Skinedown, Beastie Boys, Stone Temple Pilots, old Soundgarden, and Hair Metal - the 80's were special !*

14. How many fly rods do you own?

*I used to be an odd guy. I started with a 5 weight, branched out to a 3, then a 9, picked up a 7 for the glades, got an 11 to chase tarpon...but then came a 6, and now my evil scheme is all off kilter!*

15. What is your favorite guilty pleasure?

*Gummy. I started at the football concession stand when I was but a wee lad and they were 2 cents apiece !*

16. What is your idea of a perfect day on the water?

*With my pals - leave the dock before dawn, slick calm, poons rollin, casts unfoldin, strip it, strip it, striiiiiip it - FJSH ON!*

17. Which talent or skill would you most like to have?

*There is a severe disconnect between my brain and my hands. I understand how things work, and I can picture how to build/fix them, but I simply can't execute. I wish I was handy*

18. Which actor would play you in the movie about your life and why?

*Most likely Fabio, cause he's got my hair!*

19. What is your most treasured possession?

*My word*

20. What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?

*I am always in a hurry. We all know that you can't force things to happen, you have to take a deep breath and let them develop organically.*

Bonus Question: Who is your favorite rock guitarist?

*Kirk Hammett. I use to feed off the old school Metallica!*





# TYING THE ADAMS CRICKET

## BY JOHN ADAMS

If you are planning to attend this month's outing at the Lott's house on the May 18th, and have any hopes of catching bass or bream then it is imperative that your fly box an assortment of *Adams Crickets*. This fly, which has proven itself time and again is the creation of John Adams. Sure, other flies will catch fish, but no other fly has the proven track record on the St Johns like this simple little beauty. Taking its life from Jake Gartsides' Gurgler, the Adams Cricket morphed into panfish fly that takes everything in the family – bluegills, stumpknockers, redbellies – even bass.

It's an easy fly to tie and it doesn't have to be a perfect tie. Part of its appeal is its bug-like spidery

movement on the water's surface. Tie up a dozen or so flies and bring them with you to the River.

### *Material*

*Hook* : Standard size 10, 8, or 6. 34007, kinked shank, or light-wire bream hook.

*Craft Foam* - purchase at any craft store or fly shop, buy the thinner sheet material, or try the double thickness foam for bigger flies.

*Chenille*: Medium size, color to match or complement foam.

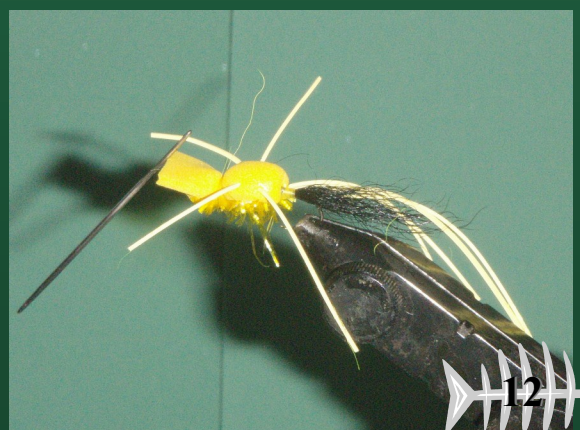
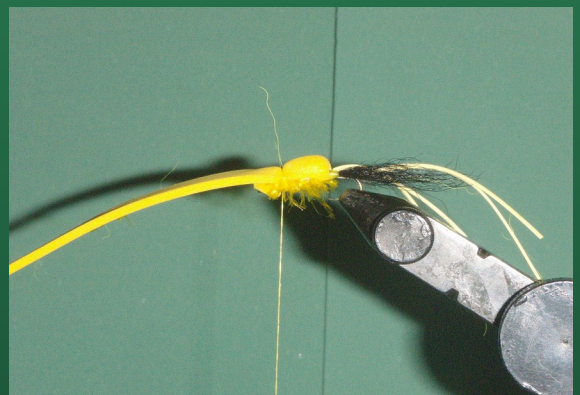
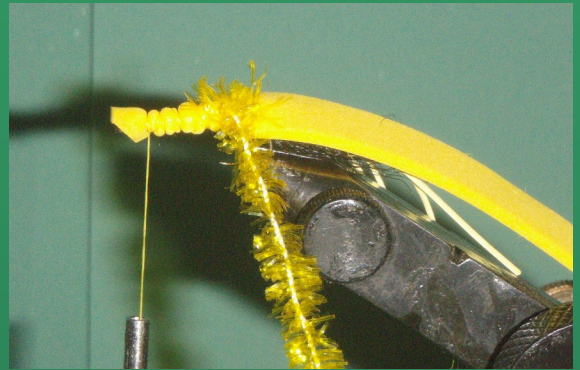
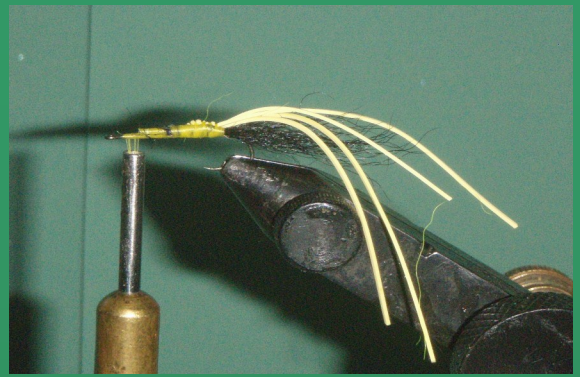
*Rubber Legs*: Color to match or complement chenille or foam - small size.





# TYING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Tie a small clump of calf, cat, or squirrel tail on top of the bend of the hook
2. Select standard length rubber legs. Fold them around tying thread and tie them on top of the hair at the hook bend.
3. Next, advance the thread toward the eye of the hook and stop about 1/8" from the eye.
4. Cut craft foam into strips 3/8" wide for bream flies or 1/2" for Bass flies (# 6 or # 4 hooks).
5. Lay the foam strip on top of the hook with the tip just covering the hook eye. Then bend the foam downward along the shank of the hook from about 3/16" behind hook eye to bend. This allows the foam to flair and provide support for the second layer of foam. Wrap the foam using raps spaced about 1/8" apart. Stop at the bend of the hook.
6. Now tie in the chenille and then advance the thread forward again stopping short at the starting point. Wrap the chenille forward and tie it in at the starting point.
7. Next, take the tag-end of the foam strip and pull it forward toward the hook eye and tie it off at the starting point of the thread. Use a whip finish knot to tie off.
8. Add legs through the body using a large eyed upholsterer's needle.





# Orvis to Acquire the Scientific Anglers and Ross Reels Businesses from 3M

**Manchester, VT (May 1, 2013)**—The Orvis Company, Inc. of Manchester, Vermont today announced it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire the Scientific Anglers and Ross Reels businesses from 3M (NYSE:MMM). Upon completion of the transaction, Orvis plans to continue to operate the Midland, MI based business independently under the Scientific Anglers brand. Ross Reels will also continue to operate independently under its brand name from its Montrose, CO headquarters. The transaction is expected to be completed in the second quarter. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

“We think both businesses have incredible opportunities to drive fly-fishing innovation well into the future,” said David Perkins, Orvis Executive Vice Chairman. “Jim Lepage will move to Midland and from there he will be dedicated to running both S.A. and Ross. He and the excellent teams already in place will build these strong brands for the future. Neither consumers nor the trade will likely notice much of a difference in the branding of these businesses under Orvis ownership. What they will notice is renewed marketing energy, well-supported sales and service staff and an even higher level of new product innovation.”

Ross Reels is well-known for an excellent line of mid-priced fly reels highly regarded by fly fishers. Scientific Anglers, founded in 1945, developed the first fly line to utilize a tapered plastic coating, the first modern floating fly line that could be fished without constant applications of messy line dressing, and the use of glass bubbles or micro balloons in floating fly lines, revolutionizing floating fly lines and still the major technology in floating lines today.

“Our goal is for Scientific Anglers to be the world leader in fly lines, leaders and tippet, and for Ross to be the leading innovator in American-made fly reels,” said Jim Lepage, newly appointed President of both businesses. “We plan to maintain strong investment in R&D at both businesses and we intend to bolster their sales and distribution resources here in the U.S. and build both brands internationally.”

Lepage, trained as an aerospace engineer, is a consummate outdoorsman and fly fisher, equally adept at hunt-



ing wild turkeys and trophy whitetails as he is with a fly rod. He holds a world record for Atlantic bonito on the fly rod and has fly fished from his home in Vermont to the spring creeks of New Zealand and most places in between. His proficiency in the field is matched by his business sense and his significant skills in managing complex manufacturing operations.

Joining Lepage and bolstering the new product innovations will be Bruce Richards, a 33-year veteran of Scientific Anglers responsible for many past new product breakthroughs. Richards had retired from Scientific Anglers in June 2009 but he says: “When Jim Lepage called me to tell me that Orvis had acquired SA and wanted me involved again I was excited! I’ve known Jim for many years and have worked closely with him developing fly lines for Orvis. We see things the same way when it comes to fly fishing and fly lines and both have a passion for fly fishing and the outdoors in general. Jim is one of the most innovative product developers I know, it will be fun to work with him again. It will be great to work with the staff at the SA factory too, that was a hard place to leave.”

Both businesses will maintain their current operations, facilities, employees and independent sales representation. Lepage will relinquish his responsibilities as Vice President of Rod & Tackle with Orvis to be fully committed to his new role as President of both companies. Lepage is relocating to Midland, where he says he will consolidate R&D for both S.A. and Ross.

“There is no plan for Orvis to carry Scientific Anglers-brand fly lines in its catalog, stores or website, nor are there plans to more widely distribute Orvis products through S.A.’s established wholesale accounts. Each brand must remain focused on being the leading innovator in their respective product categories and distribution channels,” Lepage said. “Maintaining that clarity will be the key to our success.”

**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](mailto: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!*





**First Coast Fly Fishing Unlimited**

Capt. Rich Santos • (904) 497-9736  
Rich@FlyFishJax.com • FlyFishJax.com  
Jacksonville-St. Augustine, FL

INSHORE & NEARSHORE FISHING  
Saint Augustine, Florida

**DRUM MAN**

CHARTERS

CAPTAIN JAMES DUMAS  
904.687.9498  
www.drummycharters.com

**T**

**TIBOR REEL**

The World's Finest Fly Reels

**SJ**

**Southerner's Journal**



**BLACK**

**FLY**

CAPT. TROY  
FLY FISHING or LIGHT TACKLE  
INSHORE / OFFSHORE  
BOAT or KAYAK  
904.608.8299  
TROY@CAPTAINTROY.COM

**CAPTAIN TROY .CC**

**ALL-IN-FISHIN**

**BACKWATER FISHING ADVENTURES**

*With Capt. David Borries*

**BLACK CREEK**

**OUTFITTERS**

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA WWW.BLACKCREEKOUTFITTERS.COM

**CAPT. LARRY MINIARD**

GUIDE / ANGLER

**THE ANGLER'S MARK**