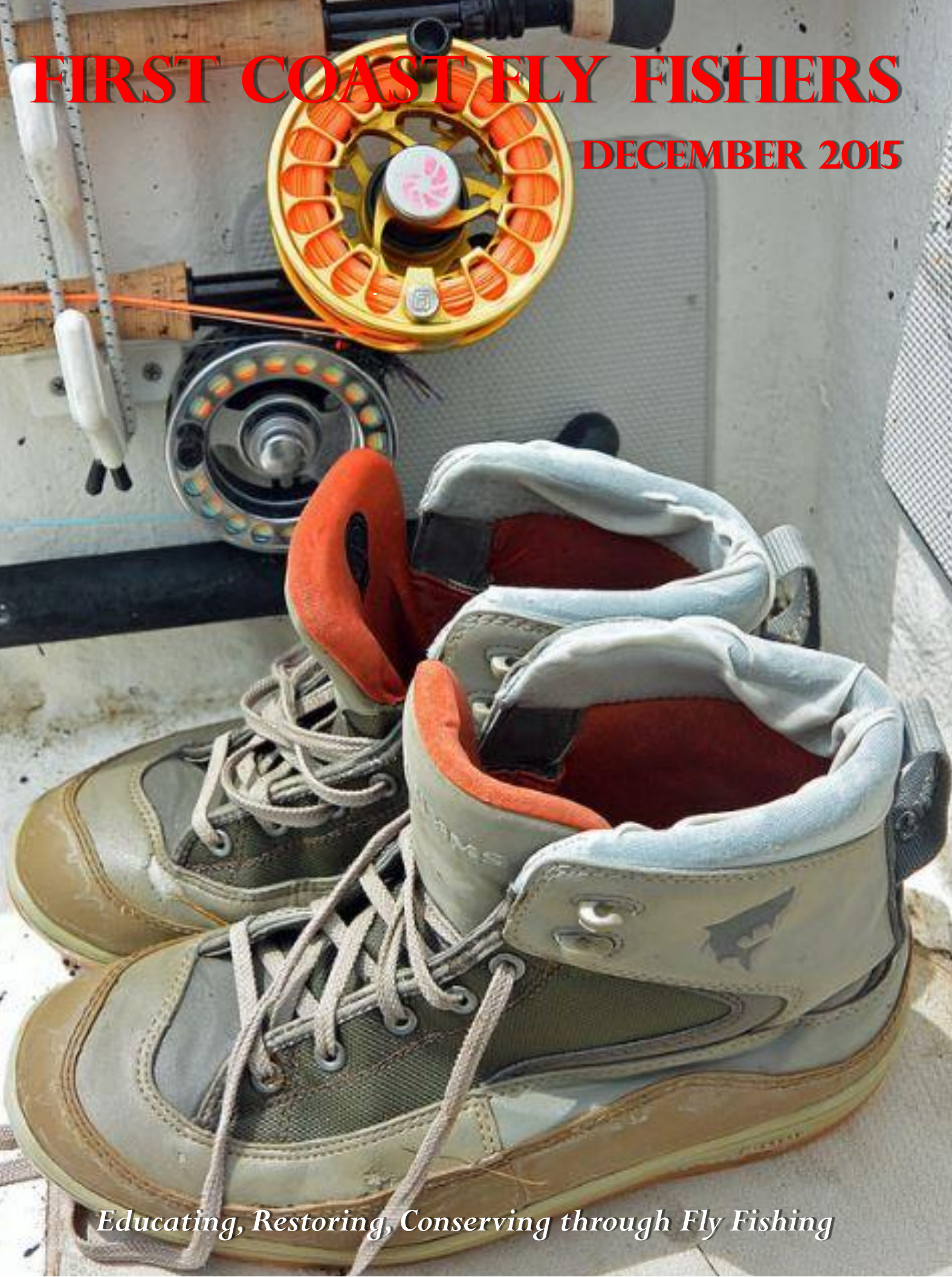


FIRST COAST FLY FISHERS

DECEMBER 2015



Educating, Restoring, Conserving through Fly Fishing



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Happy Holidays everyone! It is hard to believe that another year of fishing has drawn to a close. Redfish in the grass are giving way to shad migrating up the St. Johns. Hopefully everyone took advantage of the seasons on our local waters. From freshwater to saltwater, northeast Florida is blessed with a wide variety of fishing opportunities.

It seems like only last month Jon Cave was highlighting our annual banquet. Instead two short months away on February 27, 2016 we welcome Dr. Aaron Adams back to the Club as our guest speaker for the 2016 annual banquet. Registration for the banquet will begin in January.

As we approach the end of the year, it is a time to reflect on the members we lost in 2015. TL Larsen, Jim McCully and Buster the Bream Hound each made the world a better place in their own, unique ways. We will miss their friendship and spending time on the water with them, but their spirits will live long in all of us. Our lives are richer for having known them.

The First Coast Fly Fishers is a collaborative effort. Our success is due to the dedication, hard work and support of several individuals. The 2015 Board worked hard to bring quality programs and events to the Club this past year. Seth, Scott, Jeff, Don, Paul, Mike, Buddy, Gavin, Richard, Lee and Bob thank you for your dedication and service to our Club and the sport of fly fishing.

The Club has been fortunate to have the support of several area businesses and guides throughout 2015. Without their support, it would be difficult for the Club to enjoy the success that it has year after year. Our thanks go to Blackfly Outfitters, Saltwater Fly Tyers and Black Creek Outfitters for all their support throughout the years. We also want to thank the area guides; Captains Borries, Bottko, Dumas, James, Miniard, Piper, and Santos, for all their support in 2015.

We also want to thank our members. The Club would have no reason to exist if it weren't for our members, their support and dedication towards advancing the sport of fly fishing. Thank you very much.



**Merry Fish-Mas and
Happy New Year**

Editor

On the Cover:

Ready for the grass flats

Photograph by Captain Rich Santos

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Interview: Chico Fernandez on Cuba, Jazz, Fine Food and Fishing from Canoes

By Marshall Cutchin

Marshall Cutchin: When most people think of the pioneers of fly fishing, we think of people who started long before it had any “marketing” value. Chico Fernandez is one of those people. He began saltwater fly fishing in Cuba in the 1950s and then he moved to Miami and began developing many of the fly patterns and techniques and the ideas that made saltwater fly fishing the sport it is today. He is an author, a teacher, and a consultant, and he’s spent decades traveling around the world and sharing his excitement. But he is also an accomplished musician, and a lover of fine food and watercraft, and I’m really happy he could join us here today. Welcome Chico.

Chico Fernandez: Thank you, I’m glad to be here. Excited to be here.

Cutchin: I’ve got so much to ask you and there is no way we can fit it all into a short conversation but hopefully we can hit some of the highlights and see where we go. One thing I’m really eager to ask you about is canoes and fishing from small boats. First tell us something about how you got started in fly fishing in the first place?

Fernandez: As you said I was born in Cuba. I was born to a family of fishermen. My father fished; my uncle fished; everybody fished. By the time I was six I was in this small town by the water called Manzanillo on the east coast and we fished bottom fish in the days of no engine and those days we had to row to the areas to bottom fish for snapper and all of that sort.

I was always an angler. By the time I was 12, I became a spin fisherman. By the time I was 15 or so, I was using a spinning rod with jigs and surface plugs and catching snook and baby tarpon and black bass at Treasure Lake and so on. My father at that time made some deals with real estate and made a lot of money and ended up very quickly buying a big yacht, a 62-foot Chris Craft I believe.

For some reason Dad could not find a Cuban captain that would please him—I don’t know why, it has been a



long time—but he came to United States in Miami and got an American captain who spoke in Spanish to communicate with us and brought him over to live in Cuba. He was a fly fisherman and when I took him to the mouth of the Jibacoa river, a little creek, to fish for snook and baby tarpon, and I took my spinning rod and my yellow jigs and all of that, he brought his Orvis Battenkill bamboo rod and a Medalist reel and Ashaway line, I believe, and Joe Brooks streamers, which were feathered streamers with a hackle up front, not like a Seaducer—everything was tied up front and chenille on the body—and caught snook on fly.

Marshall, I became enamored with the fly line, which is poetry in motion. It was just ... it was *me*.

Soon I got my dad to buy me an Orvis Battenkill 9-and-a-half-foot for 8 or 9 weight [line], which was a GAF in those days, which Joe Brooks recommended. [Editor’s note: “GAF” was a pre-AFTMA letter designations for line size and taper, in this case matching a 9-weight weight-forward floating line.] I still have that rod, Marshall, and every winter around Christmas I take it out and either fish it or cast

it. By the way, it makes a very big loop. It doesn't make the loop that graphite makes, but you know what, if you get your timing right, you can still cast the whole the line just the same.

Cutchin: Maybe *you* can Chico.

Fernandez: You are good to me, but the rod is very heavy, especially tip heavy, very slow. You think it is not going to go that far but the sweep is so forceful and long and that the line goes and goes and goes. Anyways, so I fished there for a few years and caught snook and went to Isle of Pine and caught baby tarpon in Isle of Pine, the bonefish there, and cast to many permit, but I didn't know about weighted flies. The best I got were follows and flashes and you can't photograph any of that. I never hooked a permit.

In 1959, with the revolution and communism coming to the country I left real quick. My parents left in a small airplane and I had a racing Mercedes 190 two-seater, and in those days you could come from Havana to Key West on a ferry at night and I brought the car. I was going to race. I eventually sold the Mercedes and financed my education at University of Miami.

That's how I started. I came here, started in the [Miami] Rod and Reel Club and immediately met Flip Pallot, John Emery, and Normal Duncan. I think we were the only kids that were fly fishing those days, but that's how we started.

Cutchin: We were you aware of saltwater fly fishing as a sport, did it have that sort of cache back then, or was it just something that you guys were happy to do together because you thought it was fun?

Fernandez: There was almost no one doing it, to the point that I remember Flip and I and I think Little John [Emery] going to Everglades City to get a sandwich because we would go to Tamiami trail and fish for snook, as we still do sometimes. Then the gas stations that are there now and all the food—there was nothing there.

You had to drive all the way to Everglades City to get a sandwich or something to eat. So went over there and we were talking about catching 12- or 15-pound snook and losing a 20-pounder. One of the locals there got up and yelled at us and told us we were damn liars. "No one can catch a snook on a fly rod!" He was so upset he couldn't stand himself. We tried to explain but of course we were "damn liars." Okay.

The point is that I don't think this was a bad guy. I think this guy was absolutely sure that you caught bluegills with the fly rod. You didn't catch snook with a fly rod. That's how it was. In Cuba they thought I had a whip and said, "What are you doing with that? Oh my god, he has got a hook at the end. You are going to kill somebody with that boy. What are you doing?" We encountered all of that, but the other side of that coin is that some of the fishing was *ridiculous*.

In Cuba, they didn't fish for snook because they cooked it with the skin on and it tasted like urine. They hated eating snook. No one thought of skinning it, and there were snapper and many other things to eat.

Baby tarpon in the river were a nuisance. I used to buy Hayes popping bugs, the Hayes that they use for bass fishing, and hook baby tarpon 5 to 20 pounds. I had a wonderful time. Fishing areas where the river meanders through sugarcane and when it got high in noon, we would sit in the tall sugarcane shade, eat a Cuban sandwich, have an Ironbeer—which is actually a very, very old fashioned Coca-Cola type Cuban soda which is still being sold in Miami. It is like 100 years old, the company now. I don't know why Ironbeer, why an American name. Anyway we'd do that and then take a pen knife or case knife and cut the trunk of the sugar cane and peel it and chew on the sugarcane as dessert. Then later in the afternoon the tarpon would start rolling and we would go back to fishing again.



Chico with a 20-pound, fly-caught, snook caught in 1961 in South Florida.

Those days, no one knew and they had no idea ... if we saw someone

in the Tamiami trail fishing, I guarantee I knew the person intimately. If there was someone fly fishing in that 50-70 mile stretch anywhere and in the canals that crossed the Everglades, the Marko Canal or any of that, even at a distance I saw the casting style and I said, “Oh, that’s such and such.” I would know in a minute. That’s how little people were doing that.

Cutchin: Just getting back to Cuba for a minute, I mean there is still something of a time warp going on there right? I think I saw an episode of Anthony Bourdain traveling down there recently and I think he was there on the wall in front of Havana City....

Fernandez: The Malecón.

Cutchin: Malecón.

Fernandez: Yes that’s like a sea wall. A sea wall that doesn’t touch the water hardly ever. There are rocks in front for 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 feet.

Cutchin: The remarkable thing was there were still the local citizens there using yo-yos to fish with, which I think you’d be familiar with if only if you have fished in south Florida or Cuba.

Fernandez: Absolutely. I still have my father’s yo-yo made out of wood, carved with his name he roughly carved with a knife. Listen, when you throw a live sardine and hook a 25-30-pound king [mackerel] and the line is ripping through your hand the yo-yo is ricocheting all over the boat—you know how fast they can be—until you can tighten on them and bring them back. I’ve caught a lot of big fish on yo-yos. Fun to do and an easy way sometimes to bring a meal home.

You can cast it long ways if you know what you are doing and you swing it over your head like a cowboy



with a lasso but the amount of line in the air is a lot—like 7, 8 feet—very long. Just like fly fishing. The more line you carry in the air the further you can cast, right?

Cutchin: Sure or the concept of the rod just being extension of your arm. Right?

Fernandez: Yes.

Cutchin: Your arm is your rod in that case, right?

Fernandez: That’s correct.

Cutchin: We are inventing anything new when we point a tarpon rod at the tarpon and we are basically handlining a fish in.

Fernandez: Absolutely. It is the leverage. For certain fishing like the yellowtail at night, which my father loved to do where you chum the yellowtail, you end up marking your line with a knot with a piece of thread or tape to where when you bring it in and you get close to the knot, you know you are going to get hit again because that’s where the school is. If the chum is working well they keep coming slowly closer so you could either moving that tape closer or you know before you get to the tape you are going to get hit again. But when you hook the big fish at night, a really big fish, or when the shark grabbed the yellowtail, oh man, you got to watch out.

It would cut your hands and everything else, and of course in those days Marshall, we Cubans never used gloves—you know it is a macho thing. They say in Spanish “Un gato con guantes no captar ratones.” Meaning a “A cat with gloves can’t catch any mice.” You got to have your bare hands. It is a dumb way, to have your hands cut, but on the other hand, I can’t criticize it too much because I was one of them without the gloves too. I just loved to have my hands cut.

Cutchin: I don’t want to get too far off the subject but I mentioned you are also a musician, a jazz lover.

Fernandez: Yes I’m a big jazz fan. I was never really great on the clarinet. Everybody has an excuse. Mine is that I started when I was 50 years old or so. There are reasons why I didn’t start earlier, which had to do with protocol and the family that I lived with and at that level we lived you didn’t learn an instrument. But I started



late, and the clarinet is not a great instrument to start late—a blowing instrument. But you know it is like chemistry, it is like falling in love. It would have been more practical to learn a guitar or piano, but I love the sound of a clarinet. I love the piano and the guitar, but for me it was about blowing through wood. I'm a big student of Benny Goodman and Paquito D'Rivera, the magnificent clarinetist. That's what I did for many years, and I got to where I could play and understood more improvising and so on, but I love jazz—that's my favorite music. Then Cuban music, I love that of course, and classical Spanish guitar. I love that too.

Cutchin: But didn't you tell me once Benny Goodman called a clarinet a torture stick?

Fernandez: No he didn't. Some of the older musicians have called it that, and at University of Miami, when I used to take pictures of all of them in black and white, it was always called the torture stick. For Benny, no he could do anything. He could play any scale. He was a master at that. He played scales every day of his life, including the day he died, so he could blow, man.

Cutchin: It sounds like you've always been attracted to things that were just a little bit harder than the average.

Fernandez: Yes, when I started fly fishing in Cuba it was like, "What are you doing? Is it easier doing that?" "No it is very hard." "Okay but once you learn you catch a lot more fish?" "No you catch a lot less fish." "So you bring very few fish home?" "No I mainly release the fish." "Okay we are through talking. Go talk to some to some other Cuban." *[laughter]* It was like "hello."

But jazz was the same way. My father said, "Who are you listening to?"

"Well I'm listening to Dizzy Gillespie." I didn't know how to pronounce 'Gillespie' then.

"Why, I mean we have wonderful Cuban music. Don't you like that music?"

"I love that music but I'm listening to someone play the blues." Count Basie at the piano playing the blues. I just felt it to the core. I don't know why. I never smoked a cigarette in my life but I smoked a pipe and mixed my own tobacco. When I came to this country so

did Normal Duncan and John Emery, and we all had a big calabash pipes and smoked them while we fly fished on the Trail. I did that for many years. I quit 20 or 30 years ago, but I did that for years.

I don't know why. I didn't want to be different. I didn't have a choice. That's what I liked.

Cutchin: You also like cooking right?

Fernandez: I love cooking. My mother—we eventually became very wealthy and all of that and she had a chauffeur, and we lived a different life once we made the money. In those days if you had lot of money you had several maids and it was a different world. Believe me it was a different world. She still continued to cook a lot and she went Saint Michel [school] for cooking and she could make pies, and she could make all recipes of black beans and rice and red beans and rice with sausage, and the Cuban garbanzo-and-rice mix, which has ham and pork and chorizo sausage, and yeah, she was a cook.

My wife is a cook. She is from Pennsylvania. She makes the chicken and dumpling and the apple pie from scratch, but she also does the black beans and rice and the pico de gallo and all the other stuff. I cook too. Matter of fact, I thought someday I will write a cookbook because I know several really well-known Spanish chefs that cook Spanish food. I'm very knowledgeable and I'm very well read, so I thought that one day I'm going to do that. But anyway, yes, cooking is a big deal. Keeping the weight off has also been a big deal!

Cutchin: I was just about to say my stomach is growling listening to you describe all that food, and I'm a big fan of Cuban food.

Fernandez: I walk two miles very fast almost every day and do Tai-Chi. I'm not overweight, but I have to work at it.

Cutchin: Speaking of walking, that's a great way to talk about the next subject. You said to me once that you felt like you could pole a canoe farther than you could walk. It just reminded me, I think, of that core fascination or passion that anybody who has poled a boat for a long time really understands, really feels sort of in your bones about pleasure of pushing a small boat along. It really doesn't have anything to do with motors or crossing big water or anything like that. It is really about being in flat wa-



ter—whether that’s water on a flat out in the middle of the ocean or back in the backcountry where you like to fish so much. What is it that drew you to that whole part of the sport?

Fernandez: Probably the fact that it goes, as you said, back to basics. Of the crafts—probably because it is light, but mainly because of the shape—the canoe is perfect. It has a bow, and then it tapers back at the end, so it parts the water and brings it back in. Where a skiff, no matter how light and narrow it is, still has to have a square back to put the engine on, and because it needs not just a place to put the engine but needs displacement in the back. You are going to be standing all the way in the back. That’s weight and the engine is too, so you couldn’t have a pointed stern. But a canoe not only is set light and narrow, but the shape is so perfect.

The difference in poling a skiff—some of the latest super-light skiffs that you and I know about—and poling a canoe that’s maybe say 60 pounds as opposed to poling 1000 pounds of boat with engine and so on—is 100 to 1. Or I don’t know, 80 to 1. I can’t even picture it. You can do it with one hand. It is nothing. It is so insanely efficient. I’ve clocked myself for a long time in ideal conditions at about 3 miles an hour. If I could keep that up for 10 hours—I probably couldn’t but certainly I could do it for 5, 10 hours and that would be 30 miles. Five hours would be 15 miles. I couldn’t jog 15 miles. I’m not in that kind of shape. You just glide—unbelievable.

You can go just as fast paddling, sometimes a little faster if you are both paddling hard, but here is one person doing that. You could be eating a Cuban sandwich or you could be fly fishing while I’m doing the poling.

Another thing I love about a canoe: even though some of the latest skiffs like my Hells Bay draws five inches—you have a boat that grows very little—the canoe draws maybe 3 or 2-1/2. But the big difference with the skiff, your skiff and mine with the engine, is that it has to be generally launched where there is a ramp or something. You bring the car there. Here you portage the canoe over mangroves, over anything and dump it

in an area that there is no place to launch.

When you get in and shove the boat out one push and the canoe glides 10 feet, you are into wilderness already, Marshall. You are in *nowhere* land. No one has been there. That’s what is so wonderful about it. I like the very basic: no electronics, no engine, nothing. There is nothing more pure than that. Believe me, I love my skiff, and it gives me the range, whereas the canoe doesn’t give you any range to speak of. It is just a different thing. I wouldn’t trade one for the other. I have both but yes, the canoe is special.

Cutchin: Most people when they think about poling a canoe they think, “Gosh how do you stand up and pole at the same time?” But you said something very interesting to me once about what you would consider a poleable canoe, and you said something about stability.

Fernandez: Yes, most canoes today are not made for hunting and fishing. They are made to go fast, to travel long ways, to go down wide rivers and all that, but the

Of the crafts—probably because it is light, but mainly because of the shape—the canoe is perfect. It has a bow, and then it tapers back at the end, so it parts the water and brings it back in.

original canoes, and the canoes I have, are the design of the 1880s, are flat-bottomed. They have a keel and are 36, 37 inches wide. Not super wide. If they are super-wide—39 or 40 inches—they’re a tub and you can’t cover water, so it is a compromise. But I guarantee you

Marshall that you and I could stand on it—not as easy as you can stand on a boat—but you could be comfortable enough fishing standing, which is how we fish. But it needs to be flat-bottomed.

Now if you talk to an expert canoeist, he will say a keel is no good. “You can’t maneuver the thing, you can’t do this; you can’t do that.” He is absolutely correct if what you are doing is canoeing and that’s all you are thinking about, but when you are fishing and you start poling you lose yourself looking for fish and the angler in front loses himself looking for that big snook lying in low water. You can’t be thinking of just the canoeist. You’ve got to have enough initial stability that you are not thinking about that. It is a different game. If the canoeist has not been an angler, he is thinking of what he needs just to go canoeing, but no, we are going fishing in the canoe. You need a canoe 16 feet by 36, 17 by 36, 17 by 37—no more than that.



Cutchin: A longer canoe than many people would think of as being the standard I suppose.

Fernandez: 16 and 17 are pretty standard. The longer the canoe, obviously the more displacement and the higher you float and everything being equal the faster it goes but the harder it is to spin around. I could use an 18-footer in the flats easy, or even more, but when you go through the many creeks in the Everglades, the 18-footer at places it won't turn. It is just too big to make the turn, and I find 16 and 17 a better compromise for that. That's why my canoe one is a 16 Merrimack and the other one is a 17 Old Town Tripper.

Cutchin: What do you use as a pushpole when you are poling?

Fernandez: The average pushpole is 12 feet. That's very, very average. I have an 11-footer and a 13. But I like to have a two-piece pushpole in a canoe because when I go through mangrove tunnels and there is current, I don't want to be paddling. There is slippage on paddling.

I split the pole in two, sit down and pole up a creek real fast because, first, there is no slippage on poling against the bottom and, second, the bottom is always hard because there is current wherever there is a tunnel. I'm constantly slipping and going through tunnels that have got mangroves over you; you can't pole even with a 12-foot pole, so with a 6-foot pole I can pole real well. All my canoe poles are two-piece.

Cutchin: Terrific idea. You wouldn't normally think of that, but unless you've been in the mangroves and you realize that lot of time getting from basin to basin you are traveling through those small tunnels.

Fernandez: Absolutely, and the pushpole can be super-light, 2 pounds or less because, remember, it is not pushing 1000 pounds of boat with engine and all of that. It is pushing a very slippery, very narrow 70-pound canoe with two people in it. The pushpole doesn't have to be that that strong, within reason. That's something else: I always carry a spare pole split into two, tucked into one side of the canoe, because I don't want to go 10 miles somewhere in 9 inches of water and the pole breaks or something happens to it and I've got to try to paddle back in 9 inches of water—you'd die doing that. No I carry a spare pushpole,

absolutely. Never have I had to use it, I must admit, but I'm carrying it.

Cutchin: What about the actual fabrication of the canoes that you like to fish out of? Are there particular brands that you like?

Fernandez: One of my favorite is the Merrimack. It is built with very light Kevlar, very thin, and then it has got cherry wood ribs and I think ash gunnels. It looks exactly like an 1800s canoe, but instead of wood and canvas it has got Kevlar outside—which you don't need if you are in Canada, but you need in the mangrove world because there are rocks and there are pieces of mangrove sticking up. Something is always poking to the bottom of the canoe. Unfortunately you can't have the old classic wood canoes, which are still being made.

The other thing that we hadn't talked about is that you can go to remote areas in the canoe by dragging it with your skiff. Now I'll either put the canoe on top of my Hell's Bay; one end will go on top of the poling platform and the other end would be tied on the bow, so the canoe is facing down like a Porsche. It has got some aerodynamics and then I crank the engine up and go at 30 miles an hour. The other thing I do that I like even better is I simply take the canoe behind the boat and bring 3 feet onto one side or other of the engine on top of a cushion and tie it and I take off at full speed.

Full speed for me is 30 miles an hour, or 28. Then I can go to Flamingo in the Everglades and go to Broad River or go to Rogers or Little Sable Creek or whatever. Then I take the skiff to the mouth of a creek and launch the canoe and pole back inside somewhere and bring everything with me. I don't leave anything in the boat. Never have had any problem, but that's a way to get way back, float in 3 inches of water. You need the skiff to fish those areas; otherwise you need four days to get there by paddle. That's a very practical way to go.

Cutchin: Speaking of speed, you and I have traded stories about this as well, but going faster doesn't always equal catching more fish, does it?

Fernandez: I have come to the conclusion after watching some of my heroes—Steve Huff, Dave Denker and so many others that are great guides—I've come to the conclusion that sometimes you catch a lot



less because you are trying to get to one spot fast and you are covering 20 miles of the Everglades and when you are doing 50 miles an hour and even more that you are not going to look at anything else. I can't tell you how many times travelling at 28 miles an hour either I or Steve or Dave Denker would stop 20 minutes into the ride and say, "Wait I see something." "Yeah those are tailing fish." And we never get any further than that the whole day. That happens often.

You've got to be fishing through the whole area. You got to be looking also. I've gone with guys that do 50 miles an hour. When you get there you got there 15 minutes earlier or 10 minutes early—you are not going to save [much time] on a 30-minute or 20-minute run anyway, and then it takes you 10 minutes to get ready. Your shirt is upside down; your glasses are bent up the other way. One of the rods came off the rod rack. It takes a while to get going. But the other way you are relaxed. I decide to wipe my glasses. Maybe I get a bite to eat and maybe I would have a sip of water. Maybe I decide to sharpen the hook and be ready. When Huff stops I just step out, take the rod and walk into the bow. I'm ready to go. I don't have to rearrange myself

and re-dress myself.

I don't know many people you can catch as many snook with as you catch with Steve. He doesn't leave early but yet he is fishing the minute he leaves. And there have been exceptional days on a trip [planned] all the way to Shark River, which is 55 minutes to an hour and 5 minutes in a skiff, when we had stopped five minutes into the run right there in Chokoloskee because he says something or the conditions were right and he hadn't realized it before. All day we fished there. If he hadn't been looking, we would have gone an hour away and left that.

Cutchin: Yeah I've spoken to Steve about that very idea that and with Harry Spear and others as well, but if you leave the dock with a mission in your head that you have to be at a certain place at a certain time, you don't pay attention to all the different things that are happening, all the subtle little clues that are telling you that they may not be exactly the way you envisioned it as you were thinking about what you were going to do. Then you oftentimes do miss those incredible opportunities that are just sitting there waiting for you



because they are not expected or they didn't say that was going to happen in the last book that you read.

Fernandez: Right, right you never know, And you know I've even taken it one step further: I've always said, "You can't live for the moment of the strike alone." I really enjoy the ride to the fishing spot. Think about it. You are riding in the state-of-the-art, usually shallow draft, boat, riding sometimes in 7 inches of water, sometimes in deep water, sometimes on areas where you see birds all over flying over the boat or at a distance or whatever, going through mangrove tunnels. How can you block that out? Like you are closing your eyes and only waiting till you get there an hour later so you can catch a snook? How can you miss all of that? That's part of the whole thing. I enjoy that ride. I really do.

Cutchin: If you don't pay attention to it you are really missing one of the great pleasures of shallow water fishing.

Fernandez: Absolutely. The real great guides, Timmy Klein, who is one of the great bonefishermen, he points out all kinds of stuff if you are listening. "Look at the bottom. See that turtle grass. That's really rich. That turtle grass is almost 9 inches long. It holds a lot of food, blah blah blah. Why don't we stop in there." [I might say] "Shouldn't we be bonefishing?" "They are there but this is a wrong tide. It is still too high. Actually we will be stopping here later in the afternoon and look at this channel and blah blah blah. These potholes have a lot of mangrove snapper. When we go back look at them and you see that etc. etc. etc."

Even for that reason, you don't want to go fast. Also, when you go really fast in the shallow water, you kill fish. You kill stingrays. You sometimes hit a gamefish, a redfish or a snook. I've seen them killed. I've seen people hit porpoises. You can't go super shallow, say two feet, one foot or even less at 50 miles an hour, but people do. I think slow, deliberate... enjoy the moment.

Cutchin: Of course using a smaller engine has a lot of advantages to it. We have spoken about that before in terms of just the way a skiff is designed, it is designed to ride or even rest perfectly flat isn't it?

Fernandez: Absolutely. I think that's *so* important, and I've certainly experienced the same boat with three different engines and the difference is huge—how it

feels and how it handles. When the engine is too heavy and the boat sits low in the water in the rear, you push forward and the boat being at an angle you push a much bigger hull weight, and that's noise. And the fish, as you will know, feel it as well. Poling the boat is harder because you are pushing the boat at an angle instead of flat. It becomes a very poor displacement when that happens.

You are really not gaining much. And as far as gaining speed, if you want to go a lot faster you've got to do a lot more than going from 40 to 60 horsepower to really go a lot faster. You pay a huge price. And then with the heavier engine you use more fuel, so now you may need a bigger gas tank—and fuel is 6.1 or 6.2 pounds per gallon. Another 10 gallons or 15 gallons becomes 60 or 90 more pounds, and the bigger gas tank is a bunch of more pounds and the engine was bigger. This thing mushrooms for nothing. Yes the small engine is the way to go. There is no doubt. If you are going to be an angler, it is the way to go.

Cutchin: We could talk forever and I would like to follow up this conversation with some discussion about fishing strategy and fishing in skiffs. But before we wrap this one up I would like to ask you something, because I just chuckle every time I remember you saying it a few weeks ago. It had to do with pattern development in flies. What do you said was, "Red and white flies have gone out of style at least three times in the past 50 years."

Fernandez: Oh yes, that's so funny.

Cutchin: I think that could be said of a lot of different aspects of gear and techniques, as both things did get farther out and forgotten and reinvented and claimed for commercial purposes over and over again, but when you started fishing in saltwater, there were some basic patterns around that probably transferred over from different types of fishing.

Fernandez: Some from freshwater.

Cutchin: What's your perspective on that whole transition? You've seen that now for the past 50 years you've been watching fly development. What strikes you as the more interesting part of that?

Fernandez: I think that the biggest discovery that's really an improvement is the one that we



basically found, or some of the guys in the Keys discovered, that a weighted fly for bonefish, for permit, even for redfish was as a whole a better fly than a non-weighted. Yes in super-shallow water sometimes the darting action of a non-weighted fly is good, but that's an exception. In super-shallow water—anything else than even tailing bonefish and tailing redfish—we still weight the fly, even though it might be a light bead chain or something like that. When I started we used a lot of Joe Brook patterns and a Phillips pink shrimp, which was *not* a great fly. None of the stuff was weighted. We got bonefish and so on, but we never got permit. The permit did not follow.



Cutchin: Is that because there was resistance in the flying fishing community to the idea of throwing a heavy fly, was it considered ... ?

Fernandez: We didn't know about that. As a matter of fact, the first permit I caught Marshall, I caught it on something called an Optic fly, which was really a short-shank hook, white Marabou and a bead—you know the big bead, one big circle, not a bead chain that goes over the wrap of the front of the fly. You painted it and painted a big eye. When you dropped it of course it went down, with the Marabou then the most resistant [material]. I caught a permit. I think it was a 11 pounds, and while I was decidedly happy, you think I would've discovered [why it worked]. It didn't have to do with the eye, it had do with the thing dropping when I stopped it, and the fish came down and tailed on it.

Cutchin: Was that your intention or was it something you were just trying out for the first time?

Fernandez: I was just trying that out because I couldn't get a permit to hit, and years had gone by. You think I would have thought about that but I didn't. It still didn't click. I remember a mathematician, a guy with a PhD in mathematic from the northeast—I can't think of this name but he had connections with 3M—and Scientific Anglers gave him some fly and in the

mid-sixties went to fish with Woody Sexton, do you know Woody?

Cutchin: Yeah.

Fernandez: He got two or three permit. I asked the guy, "What did you catch it on?" He said, "The Optic fly. You know I dropped it and it went down and they grabbed it." I said "You know I got my permit that way too and blah blah blah."

Anyway but eventually as you know we started weighting flies. Nat Raglan came out with Puff the Magic Dragon that had glass eyes, and then we put epoxy around the glass eye. What we were doing is getting the flies weighted. And then the crab came in but the crab was weighted [too]. That whole thing—the idea that Woody could weight the fly even though we were fishing in a foot of water, which doesn't make any sense—you realize you want the thing to go down, to escape down. We didn't catch that, but Nat did and so did Huff and so did Del Brown.

Cutchin: Do you think that was because at that moment in time, the guys were beginning to think of what is the behavior of the prey these fish are actually going after?

Fernandez: I think so. Nat Raglan was very good at what he did and Huff was probably born being good. I don't remember when Huff was bad. I knew Huff before he guided. I remember the day he told me he graduated in Marine Biology University of Miami with a bachelor's. The day after, we met at Bob MacChristian's, who made the Sea Masters [reels], and we congratulated each other. I said, "What are you going to do now?"

"I'm going to guide; I'm going to be a fishing guide."

"Are you sure because we could do that "

"No, no that's what I'm going to do."

It was done. I think it was good already. Yes, he and Del Brown and Nat Raglan those guys, they gave it a lot of thought. I knew Nat also before he

was a guide when he used to run the movies at the theater. He was the guy who handled the projector at the theater, and we used to sneak in there and I was there for free and we would bring popcorn and watch the movie three times in Miami Beach before he was a guide.

Yes, he went to sleep at night thinking about that. They discovered that. I think that's probably the biggest thing. All of a sudden you could go permit fishing and catch two in a day. That was to me—being old and having seen where we were in the late fifties and sixties—it was hard to believe, but such was the case.

Cutchin: Getting back to your comment about flies going in and out of style, don't you think it's something of a commentary on how we decide what the latest, greatest fly is and the fact that oftentimes flies that worked 20, 30 years ago, the flies which we might *should* be using in this particular situation, but since they've "stop working or become unpopular" we don't even think about them? Right?

Fernandez: I think *very* much. I think I told you that I researched the IGFA marine library and found that in the year 200, the first fly that they have is basically white feathers—which were little bit off color, almost yellowish—but white feathers with a red wool head, a red and white fly. It has been going in and out of vogue in the fly fishing world forever. That color was the color for steamers for black bass for years. In the thirties, Tom Loving used to use it and gave it Joe Brooks, who brought it to Miami. And of course he got snook and baby tarpon with red and white. A red and white fly, yellow with a red hackle. Or all-black; black is a wonderful color for baby tarpon, for snook. For big sea trout.

Cutchin: And night fishing, right?

Fernandez: In night fishing it shows the best silhouette.

Night fishing is wonderful. I went to fish in the Gulf of Mexico in the oil rigs and the big schools of jacks. The fly they used was all-black with a little bit of purple in it—dark purple—but the point is it was big black fly. I thought, *Now you need something shiny because they are not going to take the [basic] black as well.* Are you kidding? Threw the fly—they didn't even move it, like it was a live sardine. They came up and grabbed it. That's it.

When you see a big change now in flies in the last 20 years is that no one has *rediscovered* anything. What happened is, new material came in and they could do something that they couldn't do before. The big, long, skinny barracuda flies came about because we got FisHair and we can tie a fly 8 inches long, 10 inches long. That's why.

Cutchin: Remember when the Merkin came along? I don't think anybody had been tying permit flies with Aunt Lydia's carpet yarn at that point. Suddenly the craft stores in the keys were sold out of yarn.

Fernandez: They were all men buying it.

Cutchin: They were all men, and they were getting some fairly strange looks.

Fernandez: Yeah that's true. I remember buying it and a woman saying "Does your wife want it?"

"No that's for me."

"Do you want the tan and the green?"

"I will take some of that pink."

"Okay, you are in America. You can do anything you want."

One of those things. I was one of the first people I think who took Merkins and did something else with them I think: in the chum line that was a great fly. The Merkin—when you got big, wise rainbow runners, which is a fish I like and wouldn't take flies—they ate that crab really well. I also got and I still get some very good-size tripletail with a weighted crab.

Cutchin: One of the many topics that we need to talk about at some point is permit fishing, because I think for you it may be your favorite type of fishing, like it is mine.

I do want to mention that you are working on a redfish book, and that's very exciting because the quality of your bonefish book was really extraordinary. If the redfish book is going to be anything like that I'm really looking forward to seeing it when it does come out. But can we please continue this conversation on another day, because there is so much we haven't

Fernandez: Absolutely. I love talking to you Marshall. You and I see things very much alike and I'm very comfortable talking with you. We need to wet a line. I will bring the Cuban sandwiches and we will

swap the pole.

Cutchin: I will eat them.

Fernandez: What a friend!

Marshall Cutchin's interview with Chico Fernandez originally appeared on [Midcurrent.com](http://midcurrent.com). You can read or listen to the interview here: <http://midcurrent.com/people/interview-chico-fernandez-on-cuba-jazz-fine-food-and-canoes/>



**A parting shot of redfish in the grass. Until next year.
Photograph by Capt. Rich Santos**

RENEW YOUR FCFE MEMBERSHIP NOW

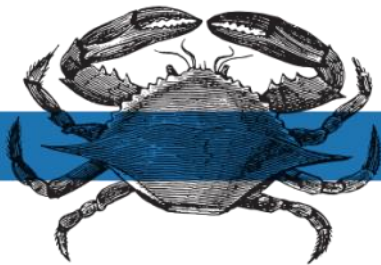
Another year of fly fishing has passed and it is time to renew your First Coast Fly Fishers membership. As the premier fly fishing club in north Florida we strive to promote the sport of fly fishing. Through our monthly meetings, annual banquet, casting clinics and fly tying classes we provide our members with numerous opportunities to broaden their skills and enhance their enjoyment of fly fishing.

At \$100/year (a little over \$8 a month) for a membership that covers the entire family, we are the one of the best deals in fly fishing. Your membership dollars allow us to put on casting clinics and seminars with the

Check Us Out on... 

In case you were not aware, First Coast Fly Fishers is no Facebook. If you are on social media, be sure and check us out at <https://www.facebook.com/FirstCoastFlyFishers> to keep up to date on the latest comings and goings of the Club and the fly fishing scene in northeast Florida. If you are a luddite and do not participate in social media, you can still check out our Facebook page for the latest, most up-to-date information about the Club.

We owe a special thanks to Catherine Wysoczanski for keeping our Facebook page up to date and for scouting the internet to find interesting things to post.



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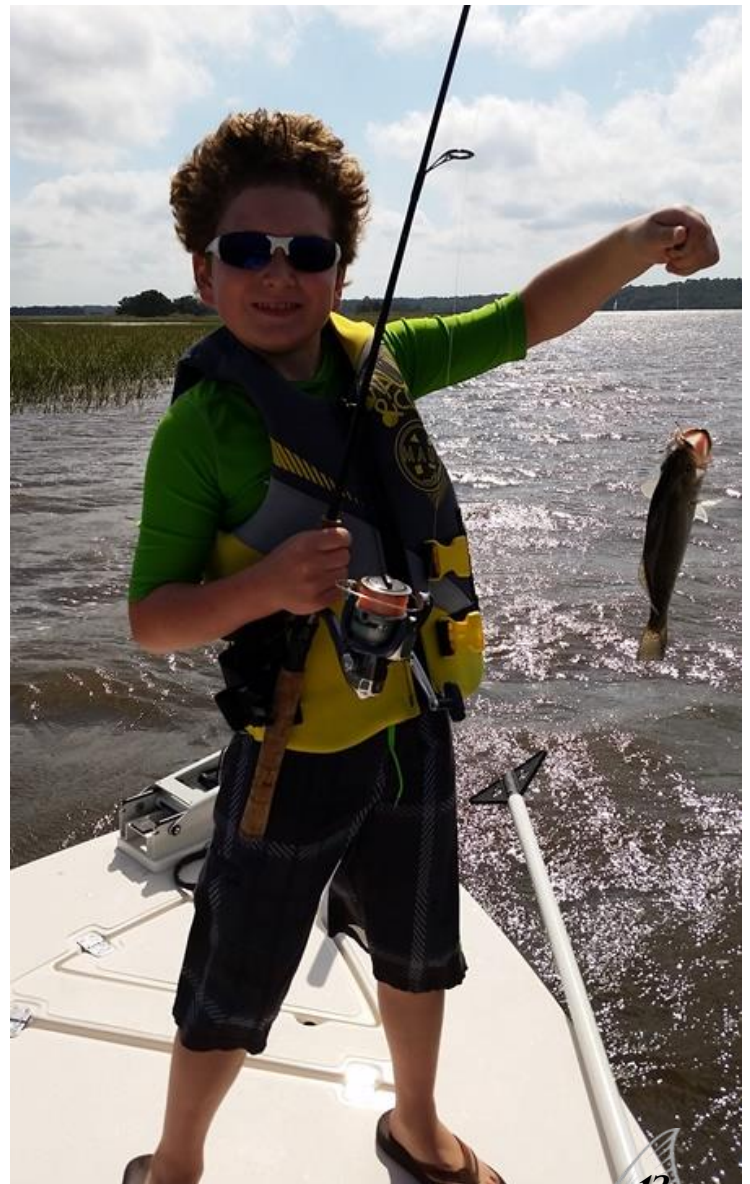
FISHERMAN'S
SEAFOOD DOCK MARKET

likes of Bob Clouser, Jon Cave, and Mac Brown at no additional cost to our members. Certified Casting Instructors David Lambert, Capt. Rich Santos and Gavin Glover provide casting instruction and lessons to our members free of charge. We also have the support of local fly shops and guides who are an excellent resource for information about our local fisheries.

The FCFE Board of Directors is in the process of planning for 2016. If there is a particular speaker of program you would like the Club present, or if there is an area we should consider for an upcoming outing, contact President Seth Nehrke at NehrkeSM@gmail.com.

Have a friend or family member who has always wanted to learn how to fly fish? A membership to the First Coast Fly Fishers is the gift that keeps on giving.

Don't delay. Renew now. You can mail your membership renewal or bring it to the next meeting. We look forward to a great new year with you.





_____(Year) **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**
FIRST COAST FLY FISHERS
WWW.FCFF.ORG

New Renewal Youth/Student

Member Information (If renewing, only complete the information that has changed)

Name _____ Spouse's Name _____

Name (Age) of Fly Fishing Children _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone: _____ Alternative Phone _____

Email Address: _____

Please check this box if you do not use or have access to email.

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Phone: _____

Medical Information:

Blood Type: _____ Allergies? _____

Current Medications? _____

Any Current Medical Conditions? _____

Occupation: _____

Other Interests _____

Who or what influenced you most to take up fly fishing and/or join FCFF? _____

Membership Dues

Annual Club Membership is \$100 and includes all family members. Please make checks payable to:
First Coast Fly fishers

Please Return Application To:

Payment Type

Check - Check No. _____

Cash

First Coast Fly Fishers
 Membership Chariman
 PO Box 16260
 Jacksonville, FL 32245-6260

Fly Fishing Experience

Overall Fly Fishing Background

Please rate your overall fly fishing experience by checking the appropriate boxes

Freshwater Saltwater Both Fresh/Saltwater
 Beginner Moderate Advanced

Casting Proficiency

Please rate your casting proficiency

Beginner - Little or no experience, or would like to learn the basics of fly casting
 Intermediate - Know the basic principals and would like to improve accuracy and/or distance
 Advance - Able to accurately cast an 8-wight line 60-feet with relative ease.
 Instructor - Professional fly casting instructor and/or guide.

Fly Tying

Fly tying is not a critical element of fly fishing; but, it is fun and rewarding. Rate your fly tying experience

Non-tyer Beginner Intermediate Advanced or Professional Tyer

Boat

Please provide information regarding whether or not you own a boat, kayak or canoe

- Boat Owner
Make _____ Type/Size _____
- I do not own a boat

Club Participation

FFCF is a not for profit club. Its success relies solely on its members who serve on the board; plan outings/events; and conducting special activities. Please indicate any areas of interest you are willing to provide assistance. Please be assured we are happy to have you as a member regardless of your level of participation.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Instruction | <input type="checkbox"/> Fly Tying Instruction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation/Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a new member fishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Banquet | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Registration Table |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Casting Instruction | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing Outings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selling Ads | <input type="checkbox"/> Greeting Guests | |

Suggestions

We are always open to suggests on how to improve our club. Your suggestions are always welcomed.

What suggests do you have for programs and monthly meetings (Topics and Speakers)?

What suggests do you have for club outings (where to go, what to fish for)?

If you are a renewing member, what could be done differently to better satisfy your fly fishing interests?

Application and Release (You must sign this release in order to become a member)

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for membership or renewal in the First Coast Flyfishers (FCFF) Club of Jacksonville, Florida, Inc. I understand the inherent risk in participating in the activities of FCFF, including fishing trips of one day or longer. I further understand that I am solely responsible for all costs of medical treatment and transportation.

I, release, indemnify, and hold harmless, FCFF, its officers, directors and members against any and all claims for personal injury, disease, death and property damage or loss that may arise out of, or be connected in any way with, any FCFF activity. I assume the risk of undertaking all FCFF activities, including related to travel.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If this is a youth membership, a parent or guardian must sign. If you are signing for a youth member:

Print your full name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Alternative Phone: _____

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

The holidays are upon us, and it is no easy task trying to figure out what to get that fly-fishing loved one. Fear not. Once again the First Coast Fly Fishers has pulled together its annual Gift Guide for that special fly fisherman in your life.

Fishpond Cerveza Side-Kick

Just as its name implies, the [Fishpond](#) Cerveza Sidekick is a constant companion for your favorite beverage, with the added functionality for the essential tools, fly boxes and other gear you need close at hand. It allows the angler to carry the priorities in a variety of ways, including use a chest pack with padded neck and waist strap, TPU coated webbing lash straps with velcro to wrap around aluminum raft frames and casting braces, or with the TPU snap tabs that allows for attachment to plastic coolers. When you want all the essentials nearby, this is the perfect solution for redfish in the grass. *Price \$69.95.*



Cortland Tropic Plus Saltwater Taper

The Precision Tropic Plus Saltwater Taper is [Cortland's](#) best all-around hot weather floating line for multi-species saltwater fly fishing. Featuring a long-body, weight-forward taper designed to cast larger flies in windy conditions, the hard-finished Tropic Plus coating is fused to a solid monofilament core so it shoots smoothly and stays tangle-free in the extreme tropical heat. *Price \$80.00.*

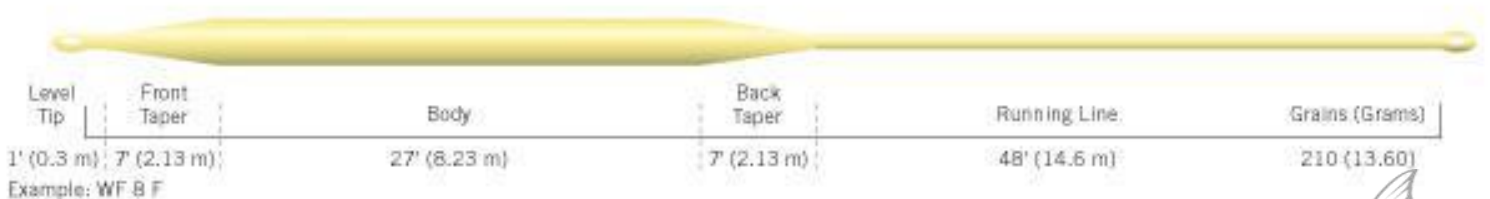


The Hatch Knot Tension Tool

The [Hatch](#) Knot Tension Tool isn't something you'd think of having in your kit, but once you've used it you'll never leave home without it. We've all been there, whether it's flats fishing, streamers, pike, or musky, you used big flies and big tippet and you go to crank down the knot and end up cutting your finger on the line or slipping and putting the fly through your finger. It's no fun. This fancy gizmo is great for cinching down those big knots and making you're getting the most out of your fishing. Plus it has a built in bottle opener, who wouldn't want one? *Price \$40.00*

Abel Nippers

The last pair of nippers you'll ever buy. Designed, manufactured, and assembled in the US by [Abel](#), these anodized aluminum nippers feature stainless steel jaws, are saltwater resistant, and can even cut through 100-lb. braided line. *Price \$60.*





Scott Meridian Fly Rods

The all new [Scott](#) Meridian fly rod is specifically designed for saltwater fly fishing. Scott Fly Rods designed it on their award winning ReAct technology to bring you a series of saltwater fly fishing rods that are remarkably light, and generate exceptional line speed and power.

Using increased recovery speed rather than stiffness to more efficiently transfer energy, these Scott Meridian fly rods help you quickly make accurate fly casts at any distance in demanding saltwater fly fishing conditions. You'll be amazed at how fast you can get the fly from your hand to the fish.

Scott Meridian fly rods are fit with newly designed components that defy harsh saltwater fly fishing environments. Scott Fly Rods designed a new rod reel seat milled from aircraft grade aluminum, featuring self-indexed slide hoods, extra deep knurling to easily turn lock rings with wet hands, type 3 mil-spec hard coat in non-reflective flat black, and line weight engravings for quick fly rod identification in boat racks.

These fly rods will truly last and perform in the salt even under the rigors of fishing year around. Scott Fly Rods focused on every detail so you could focus on the fish. Available at [Saltwater Flytyers](#). Price \$850.

Tibor Reels

You can't go wrong with a [Tibor](#) reel. For years Tibor has set the standard for saltwater reels that are both innovative and tough, able to withstand the harsh demands of saltwater fly fishing.

Tibor Reels has never been one to rest on their laurels. They are constantly testing new products and making improvements to existing ones. Over the years they've made many subtle changes to their products as new materials and technologies come into the market. Their newest update is the spool pattern for the Tibor Series reels. This new pattern lightens the weight of The Pacific from 14.5 oz to 13.2 oz., The Gulfstream from 12.5 oz. to 10.9 oz. and The Riptide from 9.7 oz. to 9.oz. Yet, the

integrity of the spool will withstand even the toughest fishing conditions and will fit all older models.

The Tibor Signature Series is different than other sealed drags on the market today. The retrieve can easily be converted and the system can be disassembled for maintenance yet still remain under warranty. Hub systems can be purchased separately, are easy to swap out and will fit all current Tibor Signature reels. Price Varies.



Dublin Dog Collar and Leash

Don't forget your four-legged children this year. [Dublin Dog](#) has a hole line of fish-inspired collars and leashes for your dog.. Let's be honest, no matter what you get your dog this year for Christmas, they will be ecstatic and consider you the best master ever. That is until they get distracted by the squirrel in the yard. Dublin Dog's products are made right here in the USA. Unlike traditional cloth collars, that get grimy and smelly after a couple trips to the beach. Their KOA collars are made of woven polyester, which is covered with a UV protected urethane that makes them both water and odor proof. These products are made with the same high quality components found of North Face and Patagonia products. Price: Collar \$24.00, Leash \$24.00.





Vaugh Cochran Clapboard Marsh Print

You've fished Clapboard Creek countless times. You probably know where this sandbar is located. Who knows, maybe that's you in the painting. There is no better way to memorialize the days you've spent on the water in northeast Florida than with one of [Vaughn Cochran's](#) latest prints - Clapboard Marsh. This painting is based on a photograph taken by FCFE member Capt. Rich Santos.

If you can't be on the water, this painting may be the next best thing. The unique thing about this painting is that it is reminiscent of salt marshes all along Florida's east coast. It makes the ideal gift for any Florida fisherman regardless of whether they are familiar with Clapboard Creek. If the Clapboard Creek Marsh print isn't to your liking (or if you've already got a copy) then check out one of Vaughn's other prints available through his store or on-line. *Price \$200.*

Fish-Skull Fly Tester

This is what you get the fly tyer who has everything? The Fish-Skull Fly Tester. It is an innovative, complete out-of-the-box solution for fly testing and demonstration that enables fly tyers to "swim-test" and, ultimately, design better fly patterns.

The Fly Tester fills a key gap in the traditional process of developing a successful fly: DESIGN - TIE - **TEST** - CATCH FISH. Made with a high quality, crystal-clear, acrylic swim tank with innovative (bi-directional) water

flow design, the Fly Tester has upper, middle, and lower sections that allow you to swim up to 3 different types of flies (streamers, nymphs and surface flies) at the same time. The slim line design has a small footprint to fit any fly tying bench.

The Fly Tester from Fish-Skull has been recognized for its ingenuity and innovative concept and won the **"Best In Show"** award in the Fly Tying category at the 2014 International Fly Tackle Dealer Show. *Price \$285.00*





Jackson Kayak Cruise 10 Angler

The Jackson Kayak Cruise 10 Angler kayak fills a variety of niches. It is a great price point kayak for someone looking to get into kayak fishing without all the bells and whistles, but enough features to make your time on the water enjoyable. It is also a great platform for an avid angler who is looking for a small versatile kayak with a minimalistic approach. The Cruise 10 Angler is perfect for fishing smaller rivers and creeks, or even your neighborhood pond. It is also a great choice for college kayak anglers or anyone who has limited kayak storage space - dorm room, condo or apartment - or issues transporting a larger kayak. The Cruise 10 Angler is also best suited for anglers, generally, around the 215lbs mark or under and many smaller anglers still even feel comfortable standing to fish out of theirs. Available at Black Creek Outfitters. Price: \$949.00.

Simms Dry Creek Duffel

This may be the last duffel bag you will ever own. Simms' large Dry Creek Duffel bag features 150 cubic liters of dry storage that to a submersible waterproof roll-top closure. You can pack for the long haul and extend your flight because this bag has enough capacity for massive amounts of fishing gear. The padded shoulder straps and handles, combined with Hypalon strap attachment points enhance carrying comfort. /the adjustable cinch straps keep your internals secure while on board or in flight. Price \$199.95.





**Vaughn Cochran
And
Black Fly Outfitters**

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www.blackflyoutfitter.com



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Book a Guide Trip

Still at a loss to figure out what to get that special fly-fishing-someone in your life? You can't go wrong with a gift certificate from one of our local guides. What fly-fisherman wouldn't jump at the chance to spend a day with a guide stalking fish and learning the waters?

The First Coast Fly Fishers is very fortunate to have the support of the best guides in northeast Florida. From Amelia Island to Palm Coast and redfish to tarpon, David, Troy, James, Lawrence, Rich and Larry have you covered. These guys know the local waters better than anyone.

Can't decide which guide to go with, then contact the folks at either Blackfly Outfitters or Saltwater Flytyers,

they will help can help make arrangements with any of these guides. While they are at it, the folks at both shops can help make sure that your special someone is properly outfitted for their trip with the right rod, reel, flies and clothing.

Not only will booking with these guides help guarantee a successful trip, it is also a way to say thanks and give back to these hard-working professionals who have supported our Club throughout the years.

**Merry Fishmas and
Happy New Year!**



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Capt. Larry Miniard

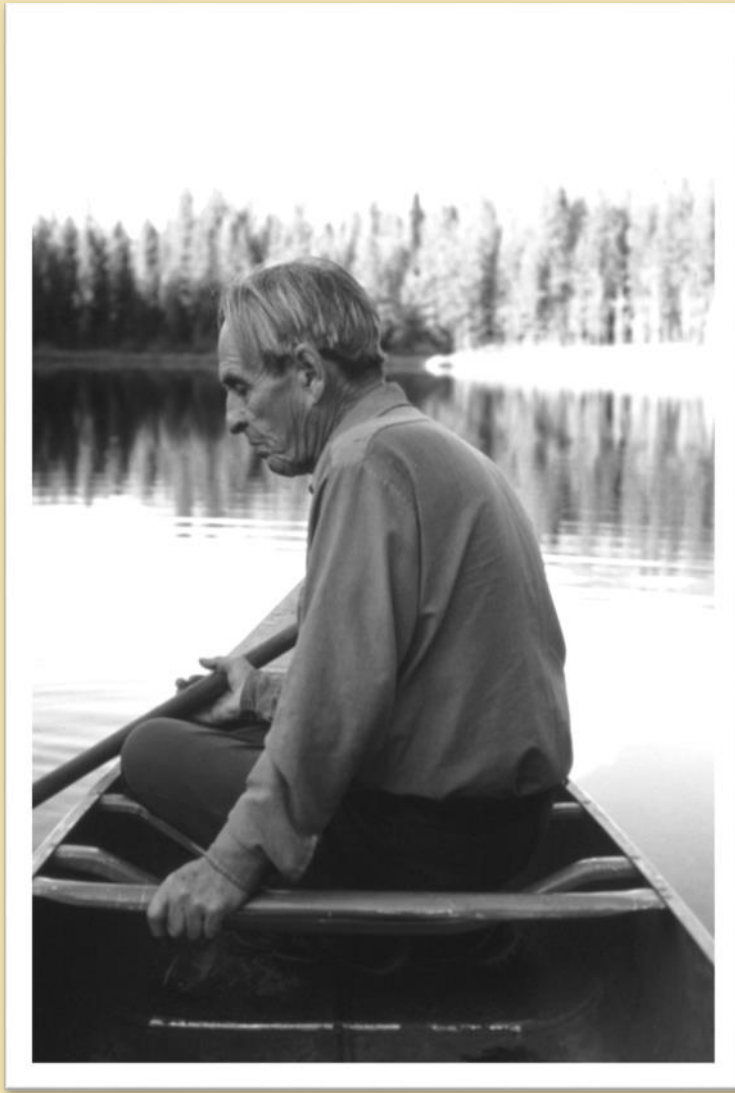
(904) 285-7003

Or

(904) 708-0060

captlim@comcast.net
larryminiard@gmail.com





“In our family, there was no clear line between religion and fly fishing. We lived at the junction of great trout rivers in western Montana, and our father was a Presbyterian minister and a fly fisherman who tied his own flies and taught others. He told us about Christ's disciples being fishermen, and we were left to assume, as my brother and I did, that all first-class fishermen on the Sea of Galilee were fly fishermen and that John, the favorite, was a dry-fly fisherman.”

-Norman Maclean
A River Runs Through It and Other Stories

One Fish, Two Fish, Redfish, Bluefish

At the end of October, Lew Holiday and Rick Palazzini spent the day with Captain Troy James. Unfortunately, the seas were too rough to head offshore. Nevertheless, the guys made a day of catching schooling for jacks, ladyfish and bluefish around the St. Augustine Inlet.

You can watch a short Youtube video of their adventure by clicking the photograph below or typing the following path in your internet browser: <https://youtu.be/D9UBg3cHfUs>



Little Bo Peep Has Lost Her Sheephead...and Look Who Found It!

Just when you thought the Great Sheephead-Steak debate was over, Mike McQuiston goes and catches a sheephead. That puts the Club's catch up to 5 this year. Good thing no one can confirm the supposed offer of a free steak dinner to any Club member that catches a sheephead. Otherwise, we would have to dip into the Club's savings to pay off the debt!

After a 3-year dry spell, Mike managed to catch this sheephead in early October with a foam and epoxy fly he calls the "Sheelback Redeye Fidler." The fish



Announcing the FCFF 2016 Annual Banquet

The First Coast Fly Fishers is proud to announce that Dr. Aaron Adams, PhD, Director of Science and Conservation for the Bonefish & Tarpon Trust will be the guest speaker for its' 2016 annual banquet. The banquet will be held on Saturday, **February 27, 2016** at the Southpoint Marriott hotel.

Known at the Flats Doctor, Dr. Adams is an avid fly fisherman and one of the world's leading authorities on tarpon and bonefish habitat and conservation. In his capacity with the Bonefish & Tarpon Trust he oversees collaborative efforts in research and conservation of bonefish, tarpon and permit habitat.

He has written three excellent and insightful books on fly fishing and fly tying.

Detailed information about the banquet will be forthcoming. In January you will be able to register for the banquet at the same time your renew your Club membership.



John Morford has caught plenty of redfish elsewhere in county. However, during the October outing, with John Adams, he managed to catch his first Florida redfish. According to John Adams, Morford nearly fell out of his kayak as he was stalking the redfish in the grass. He managed to regain his composure and make a stealthy approach to a red tailing in the grass. He made an excellent cast just to the left of a small clump of grass. The problem was that the red was feeding on the right. Its tail went down and he snuck around the clump of grass and nailed John's fly. The fight was on. He fought the fish for about 10 minutes when John told him something Lefty once said, " the fish already knows how to swim so just stop playing around a get the fish in the boat." Morford obliged and netted a nice 25" Florida redfish! **Congratulations John!**



December 2015 Tides Mayport, Florida (Bar Pilot Dock)

DATE		TIME	HEIGHT		DATE		TIME	HEIGHT		DATE		TIME	HEIGHT	
12/1/2015	Tue	12:17 AM	4.6	H	12/13/2015	Sun	9:58 PM	4.5	H	12/22/2015	Tue	11:46 PM	-0.7	L
12/1/2015	Tue	6:05 AM	0.6	L	12/14/2015	Mon	3:23 AM	-0.2	L	12/23/2015	Wed	6:39 AM	5.4	H
12/1/2015	Tue	12:36 PM	5	H	12/14/2015	Mon	10:22 AM	5.2	H	12/23/2015	Wed	12:34 PM	-0.5	L
12/1/2015	Tue	6:49 PM	0.6	L	12/14/2015	Mon	4:12 PM	0.1	L	12/23/2015	Wed	6:58 PM	4.6	H
12/2/2015	Wed	1:08 AM	4.5	H	12/14/2015	Mon	10:45 PM	4.5	H	12/24/2015	Thu	12:40 AM	-0.9	L
12/2/2015	Wed	7:04 AM	0.9	L	12/15/2015	Tue	4:11 AM	-0.1	L	12/24/2015	Thu	7:31 AM	5.5	H
12/2/2015	Wed	1:25 PM	4.8	H	12/15/2015	Tue	11:07 AM	5.1	H	12/24/2015	Thu	1:26 PM	-0.6	L
12/2/2015	Wed	7:42 PM	0.8	L	12/15/2015	Tue	5:00 PM	0.1	L	12/24/2015	Thu	7:50 PM	4.6	H
12/3/2015	Thu	2:02 AM	4.5	H	12/15/2015	Tue	11:34 PM	4.6	H	12/25/2015	Fri	1:30 AM	-0.9	L
12/3/2015	Thu	8:03 AM	1	L	12/16/2015	Wed	5:05 AM	0.1	L	12/25/2015	Fri	8:20 AM	5.4	H
12/3/2015	Thu	2:16 PM	4.7	H	12/16/2015	Wed	11:56 AM	5.1	H	12/25/2015	Fri	2:14 PM	-0.7	L
12/3/2015	Thu	8:32 PM	0.8	L	12/16/2015	Wed	5:55 PM	0.1	L	12/25/2015	Fri	8:40 PM	4.5	H
12/4/2015	Fri	2:58 AM	4.5	H	12/17/2015	Thu	12:28 AM	4.6	H	12/26/2015	Sat	2:18 AM	-0.9	L
12/4/2015	Fri	8:59 AM	1.1	L	12/17/2015	Thu	6:08 AM	0.3	L	12/26/2015	Sat	9:07 AM	5.3	H
12/4/2015	Fri	3:09 PM	4.5	H	12/17/2015	Thu	12:50 PM	4.9	H	12/26/2015	Sat	3:00 PM	-0.6	L
12/4/2015	Fri	9:19 PM	0.8	L	12/17/2015	Thu	6:54 PM	0.1	L	12/26/2015	Sat	9:27 PM	4.5	H
12/5/2015	Sat	3:53 AM	4.6	H	12/18/2015	Fri	1:27 AM	4.7	H	12/27/2015	Sun	3:05 AM	-0.7	L
12/5/2015	Sat	9:52 AM	1.1	L	12/18/2015	Fri	7:17 AM	0.3	L	12/27/2015	Sun	3:46 PM	-0.5	L
12/5/2015	Sat	4:01 PM	4.5	H	12/18/2015	Fri	1:49 PM	4.8	H	12/27/2015	Sun	10:13 PM	4.4	H
12/5/2015	Sat	10:04 PM	0.8	L	12/18/2015	Fri	7:54 PM	0	L	12/28/2015	Mon	3:51 AM	-0.5	L
12/6/2015	Sun	4:44 AM	4.7	H	12/19/2015	Sat	2:31 AM	4.8	H	12/28/2015	Mon	10:34 AM	5	H
12/6/2015	Sun	10:43 AM	1	L	12/19/2015	Sat	8:27 AM	0.3	L	12/28/2015	Mon	4:31 PM	-0.3	L
12/6/2015	Sun	4:51 PM	4.5	H	12/19/2015	Sat	2:54 PM	4.7	H	12/28/2015	Mon	10:58 PM	4.3	H
12/6/2015	Sun	10:48 PM	0.7	L	12/19/2015	Sat	8:54 PM	-0.2	L	12/29/2015	Tue	4:38 AM	-0.1	L
12/7/2015	Mon	5:30 AM	4.9	H	12/20/2015	Sun	3:39 AM	5	H	12/29/2015	Tue	11:15 AM	4.8	H
12/7/2015	Mon	11:31 AM	0.8	L	12/20/2015	Sun	9:34 AM	0.2	L	12/29/2015	Tue	5:17 PM	0	L
12/7/2015	Mon	5:38 PM	4.4	H	12/20/2015	Sun	4:01 PM	4.6	H	12/29/2015	Tue	11:41 PM	4.2	H
12/7/2015	Mon	11:30 PM	0.5	L	12/20/2015	Sun	9:53 PM	-0.3	L	12/30/2015	Wed	5:28 AM	0.2	L
12/8/2015	Tue	6:14 AM	5	H	12/21/2015	Mon	4:44 AM	5.1	H	12/30/2015	Wed	11:56 AM	4.6	H
12/8/2015	Tue	12:16 PM	0.7	L	12/21/2015	Mon	10:37 AM	0	L	12/30/2015	Wed	6:04 PM	0.2	L
12/8/2015	Tue	6:22 PM	4.5	H	12/21/2015	Mon	5:04 PM	4.6	H	12/31/2015	Thu	12:26 AM	4.2	H
12/9/2015	Wed	12:09 AM	0.3	L	12/21/2015	Mon	10:50 PM	-0.5	L	12/31/2015	Thu	6:22 AM	0.5	L
12/9/2015	Wed	6:55 AM	5.1	H	12/22/2015	Tue	5:43 AM	5.3	H	12/31/2015	Thu	12:38 PM	4.4	H
12/9/2015	Wed	12:58 PM	0.5	L	12/22/2015	Tue	11:38 AM	-0.2	L	12/31/2015	Thu	6:52 PM	0.4	L
12/9/2015	Wed	7:05 PM	4.5	H	12/22/2015	Tue	6:03 PM	4.6	H	12/27/2015	Sun	9:51 AM	5.2	H
12/10/2015	Thu	12:47 AM	0.1	L										
12/10/2015	Thu	7:36 AM	5.1	H										
12/10/2015	Thu	1:37 PM	0.3	L										
12/10/2015	Thu	7:47 PM	4.5	H										
12/11/2015	Fri	1:24 AM	0	L										
12/11/2015	Fri	8:16 AM	5.2	H										
12/11/2015	Fri	2:14 PM	0.2	L										
12/11/2015	Fri	8:30 PM	4.5	H										
12/12/2015	Sat	2:01 AM	-0.1	L										
12/12/2015	Sat	8:56 AM	5.2	H										
12/12/2015	Sat	2:50 PM	0.1	L										
12/12/2015	Sat	9:13 PM	4.5	H										
12/13/2015	Sun	2:41 AM	-0.2	L										
12/13/2015	Sun	9:38 AM	5.2	H										
12/13/2015	Sun	3:29 PM	0	L										

