

First Coast Fly Fisher

November 2006

www.fcff.org

Jacksonville, FL



photo: Jason Sheasley

View of Loyalsock Creek From World's End State Park, Pennsylvania. Article on page 4 & 5.

MEETING & SPEAKER

FCFF Meeting: Monday, October 2 -- Capt. Kent Gibbons of Ormond Beach, FL will be our November featured speaker. Kent has guided in the Tomoka Basin, Tomoka River for 35 years. He is a 3-time world record holder, an Orvis endorsed guide, and has been a featured guide on the Fox Sports Network. Kent also has an MA in Education, so he should be good at telling us everything we need to know to fish the Daytona, Ormond area.

COMING EVENTS

FCFF November Outing: Cumberland Island Trout Outing with Dr. Jim McCully: Date and times to to be decided at November meeting.

Free Fly Fishing Clinic with Bob Clouser: Sunday, Dec 3 -- FCFF and North Florida Fly Fishers of Gainesville bring to town fly fishing great Bob Clouser for a free day of learning, laughs, tying and casting. Clouser is a perennial favorite with our club. He's fished all over the world and ties some of the most useful flies in the business. Bring rods and tying setups. We'll provide lunch and drinks. 9 - 4:30 at M & M Dairy, Holstein Rod, off New Berlin Rod on the Northside.

See page 2 for more info.

Dec 15 & 16 - Outing To Florida House Inn: Fernandina Red and Winter Trout Fishing - More Info at November at Meeting and at Website, www.fcff.org

Bob Clouser Day Dec 3

Join FCFF & NFFF For Free Fly Clinic at M & M Dairy

First Coast Fly Fishers (FCFF) joins with North Florida Fly Fishers of Gainesville (NFFF) for a free day fun and fly fishing with perennial favorite Bob Clouser. Clinic, hands-on seminar, fly fishing school, fun day — whatever you call it, Bob Clouser be here Sunday, Dec. 3, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



FCFF Pal Bob Clouser

Nymph, Crippled Minnow, Mad Tom, Darter Hellgrammite, E-Z Popper, Floating Minnow and many others.

Clouser specializes in guiding fly fishermen for smallmouth bass on Pennsylvania's Susquehanna River, but he is a hugely knowledgeable saltwater fisherman and he annually leads

Doug and Theresa Moore have offered us the use of the M & M Dairy facilities for this daylong event. It is free to club members. Drinks and lunches will be provided

Bob Clouser is the inventor of arguably the most important fly in fly fishing — the Clouser Deep Minnow. The Clouser Minnow has become the fly of choice for many fishermen because of its effectiveness with a wide range of species from the mountains to the coast. The fly is said to be the most effective under-water fly pattern developed in the last four decades.

Clouser is equally famous, if not legendary, in the sport. Clouser is also the innovator of many other fishing patterns, including the Clouser's Crayfish, Swimming

trips to the fly fishing hinterlands. Such trips provide the materail for Clouser's outdoor columns and photography. Bob has written for most fly tying and flyfishing press and broadcast media.

When not traveling in pursuit of fish, Clouser oversees the family business - Clouser's Fly Shop and Mail Order Business in Royalton, Pa. He also is on the fly fishing advisory staff for the St. Croix Rod Company.

Clouser is a supporter of catch-and-release fishing and has been presented many awards for his conservation work to enhance smallmouth bass fishing in Pennsylvania. His awards include induction into the National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame as a legendary angler, the Warm Water Committee Achievement Award presented by the Federation of Fly Fishers, the Dr. James Henshall Award presented by the Federation of Fly Fishers, 1995 Conservation Award of the Year presented by Susquehanna Smallmouth Alliance and the Charles K. Fox 1997 Rising Trout Conservation Award presented by The Cumberland Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Come join as First Coast Fly Fishers and North Florida Fly Fishers of Gainesville for this free day of camaraderie, fly tying, and fly casting. Bring rods and/or tying equipment. We'll provide the food and drinks.

Please contact David Lambert if you plan to attend, dlambert@onwatermedia.com. See www.FCFF.org for directions. We'll need a head count for food and drinks.



Clouser Coaches Julie Marshall

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NEWSLETTER

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Either Hand Casting

Double Your Pleasure, Double Your Fun

by **Dan Lagace**
(Ed. note: Dan Lagace is one of the top casting instructors in the state. He is well-known for his innovative approaches to learning to cast and his 100-foot casts with either hand.)



Learning To Cast With Both Left and Right Hands Will Help In Virtually All Casting Situations

Either-Hand fly casting offers numerous advantages, and not the least of them is a dramatic improvement in your strong-hand casting. It also doubles the range of fishing and presentation angles in open, windy conditions, and when you are casting into cover. In addition, Either-Hand fly casting lets you avoid most back cast obstacles, allowing you to fish with equal ease from “either side of the river.” Further, it’s an excellent way to teach yourself how to teach fly casting to others.

Try the following 8-step process to teach yourself how to cast with either hand. Be sure to wear eye protection and use a bare leader when you try this. It will take about 30 minutes.

1. Start with 45 feet of line. Grasp the rod with your left hand and pinch the line between the first finger of your left hand and the grip.
2. Envelope the outside of your left hand with your right hand: thumb-over-thumb, fingers-over-fingers.
3. Begin false casting with the rod on the right side; left arm comes across the chest. Let your right hand control the rod, your left hand becomes part of the grip; goes along for the ride. Most pressure is with the right hand.
4. Increase grip pressure of left hand so right and left hand pressure are equal. Both hands in equal control to assimilate good left-handed casting from right hand experience.
5. While false casting, move your hands close to right side

of your face, sensing equal control with both hands.

6. Lay the line down with a forward cast. Lift the line, still casting from the right side, make 6 false casts, lay the line down. Repeat until pickup back

cast is as good as regular false casts.

7. Transfer control to the left hand. Lift the line to cast, but now to the left side of your face. Continue false casting while moving your hands incrementally between casts to the left hand casting position, with hands outside of your left shoulder, right arm comes across your chest. Transfer control to your left hand by gradually increasing the pressure of the left hand on the grip while diminishing pressure with the right hand with each false cast.

8. Separate your hands and manage the running line with your right hand. Cast left-handed!
(This article appropriated with permission by its author and the Mangrove Coast Fly Fishers newsletter)



Mike McQuiston With Grass Caught Redfish

Pennsylvania's Loyalsock Creek

A Florida Geologist Goes Fly Fishing with Dinosaurs



Loyalsock Creek In Full Fall Plumage

by Jason Sheasley

I have often wondered what it would be like to take my fly rod and go back in time 400 million years ago to the Devonian Period – *the Age of Fishes*. This is the geologic period in which fish first began to evolve. In early October, I took a back in time when I attended the 71st Annual Field Conference of Pennsylvania Geologists. The conference focused on

the geology of the Allegheny Plateau Region of northeastern Pennsylvania. This the region in Pennsylvania where I grew up, the home of famous trout streams like Slate Run, Fishing Creek and Loyalsock Creek. It was on these creeks that I honed my fly fishing skills.

Shortly after the conference, I set out to re-acquaint myself with the streams I fished as a teenager and do a little fly fishing. My head was full of geology as I made my way to a stretch of Loyalsock Creek in Sullivan County. Loyalsock Creek is a freestone creek that begins in the glaciated mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. It flows along the spine of the Appalachian Mountains then empties into the West Branch of the Susquehanna River west of Williamsport. Along the way it cuts through millions of years of geology, creating fantastic vistas and water gaps.

The Loyalsock may not be as well known as some of its sister waters, but it does have its own unique history. At the turn of the 20th Century, Loyalsock Creek was well known to produce brook trout averaging 10-14 inches. Fly fishing luminaries like George Harvey, Charlie Meck, Joe Brooks and Charlie Fox fished the Loyalsock, along with U.S. Presidents Herbert Hoover and Jimmy Carter. Growing up I heard whispers of fabled fish and unimaginable numbers of native trout.. Nowadays, the best fishing is limited to the delayed harvest and fly-fishing-only sections of the creek.

I last fished Loyalsock Creek years ago. Luckily, things change at a geologic pace in this area of Pennsylvania and most of the area along the Creek was as I had remembered, sparsely populated and thickly forested. The water was crystal clean, making it easy to see, but also easy to be seen. Insects on the water had begun to stir in the warm afternoon sun. I took a

position along the bank, down stream of a pool created by a series of boulders.

My first cast was upstream, to the right of the boulders. I allowed my fly to drift along the edge of the pool. On subsequent casts, I inched the fly closer and closer to the edge of the eddy. Drift after drift failed to produce a strike. Eventually, I began to work the left

side of the boulders. Again, each drift went unnoticed. As I moved up to the next pool, a dark shadow jutted from a calm eddy into the center of the stream. At least I knew the creek still had fish.

The next beat was a long pool created by one of the creek's incised meanders. A bedrock cliff rose along the outside of the meander. The calm pool waters reflected both trees and sky. I tied a dark colored nymph as a dropper onto the slate drake and cast upstream.

I planned to work the pool slowly from the near to the outside of the meander but my eyes began to wander. The hardwood trees around me had once made this area the lumber capital of the world. Now, instead of stumps and barren forests, I was bathed in autumn hues. I'd longed for these mountains back in Florida. Now I was in them, part of them.

Looking at the cliff, I tried to correlate the strata of bedrock with what I knew of the geology in that area. The red mudstone was late Devonian Age Huntley Mountain Formation.

Pennsylvania was a much different place in the Devonian Period, 340 million years ago. Back then, northeastern Pennsylvania and the area around Loyalsock Creek was a broad alluvial plain with numerous freshwater streams and rivers. These waters deposited sediment from an ancient mountain range throughout the alluvial plain. After millions of years these sediments consolidated and solidified, forming the mudstones and siltstones of the Huntley Mountain Formation.

The Devonian was a time of abundant sea life. Some of the first vertebrates to evolve on the planet were Devonian fish. Both fresh and saltwater fish proliferated in prehistoric oceans and rivers. The Devonian gave rise to several types of fish including primitive

(continued on page 5)

Pennsylvania's Loyalsock Creek

(continued from page 4) rays and sharks not to mention the first boney fishes. The boney fish are generally divided into ray-finned fish and lobe-finned fish. The ray-finned fish ultimately evolved into the dominant fish of the modern world (including salmonoids). Some lobe-finned fish species ultimately evolved into amphibians



Loyalsock Creek Brookie

wing spans. Aside from finding a hook large enough to tie a two-foot dragon fly pattern, what weight rod would you need to cast the thing? Maybe a trilobite pattern fished along the bottom would work. In my opinion, the answer to which fly would be best lies in the work of James Hutton, a noted

Not far from where I fished, long extinct lungfish had burrowed deep into the Devonian mud. These fossilized aestivation (hibernation) burrows lay among the strata of the cliffs, drilled into the Huntley Mountain mud by the planet's earliest fish. Lung fish were uniquely adaptive, burrowing tail-first. Fossilized skeletons of Devonian lungfish have been found 40 miles east of the Loyalsock, along the West Branch of the Susquehanna.

A small swirl next to my fly drew my attention back to the Loyalsock pool, a small refusal of my fly. I'd neglected my drift and lost a fish because of it. When my fly had cleared the pool, I picked up line and cast to the same spot. When the fish failed to consider my second offering, I placed the next cast a little closer to the cliff.

Blindly casting into the pool, I began to daydream about fly fishing for dinosaurs in one of the Devonian rivers that once occupied this land. What would be the best fly to use? Fossil records suggest the presence of giant dragon flies with two-foot

18th Century geologist who formulated the principal of 'uniformitarianism.' According to Hutton, *the present is the key to the past*. It would be little wonder if a well placed Clouser Minnow or Lefty's Deceiver would have the same effect on Devonian fish as they do on modern-age fish.

Soon, though, a sharp bend in my rod shook me from my reverie. Back in the present, an 8-inch brown trout had found my fly — mere bait by my Florida standards. To me it didn't matter, I was happy to be home fishing familiar waters. I returned the brown to the pool and worked my way upstream. Along the way both I caught more fish and admired the geology. As the day closed, I had managed to catch another brown trout, a brook trout, and two rainbows.

Back at my truck, I took a moment to reflect on the day. A quote came to mind from William Smith, father of English geology. To paraphrase: *The search for a fossil may be considered at least as rational as the pursuit of a fish.*



FCFFer Patricia Davis Casts To A Tailing Red At Last Month's Redfish in the Grass Outing



Instructor Dick Michaelson Works With Dr. Larry Holder Before FCFF Meeting

Red Fox Squirrel Tail Nymph

by Terry McCormick
Fly Fishers of Northwest
Florida, Pensacola

Dave Whitlock's Red Fox Squirrel Nymph is one of my favored flies for hooking both cold and warm water fish. I have used this attractor nymph with great success on the cold water rivers and streams of Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee to take rainbow, brown, and brook trout.

On local warm- water ponds and lakes, the Whitlock's Red FoxSquirrel Nymph has drawn many pan fish and bass to put a bend in my fishing stick. I tie this fly in a variety of configurations.

With or without legs, bead head or thread head, rib or no rib, some with a collar, some without, a piece of flash representing a split wing case, or no flash, and so on. I tie it in sizes 16 through 8 and they all work well for me.

Materials

Hook Mustad 9671, 2XL, size 12, wet nymph.

Head 1/8" gold bead.

Thread Gudebrod 6/0 brown BCS 98

Tail Natural red fox squirrel tail fibers.



Winning Nymph For Trout and Sunnies

Shuck Translucent Mylar tinsel.

Rib Copper wire.

Abdomen Whitlock Red Fox Squirrel Nymph Abdomen Dubbing.

Legs Pumpkin Sili Legs with green or black flake.

Thorax Whitlock Red Fox Squirrel Nymph Thorax Dubbing.

Collar Brown partridge hackle feather.

Tying Instructions

1. Debarb the hook and slide a bead onto the hook up to the hook eye. Place the hook in the vise. Lay down a thread base from the back of the bead to the hook bend.
2. Cut, clean, and stack a small bunch of fibers from the squirrel tail. Tie the fibers on top of the hook at the hook bend to form the nymph tail which should be about equal in length to the hook shank. At a shallow angle cut away the nymph tail butts and tie them down with forward thread wraps. Return the thread to the hook bend.
3. At the hook bend and on top of the hook tie in the Mylar tinsel so it extends back over the tail a length equal to the tail. Tie down the tinsel butt with thread wraps. Return the thread to the hook bend. At the hook bend tie in the rib wire. Return the thread to the hook bend.
4. Use the abdomen dubbing to dub a buggy tapered abdomen forward to just past the halfway point on the hook shank. In about 4 or 5 evenly spaced turns, wrap the rib wire forward to the front of the abdomen. Tie off the wire and cut away the wire tag end.
5. In the space between the front of the abdomen and the bead, but closer to the abdomen, tie in a pair of legs to each side of the hook shank. (*Note: Trim legs to desired length after the fly is completed*).
6. Use the thorax dubbing to dub a buggy thorax with one or two dubbing wraps behind the rear legs, several wraps between the rear and front legs and a wrap or two in front of the front legs.
7. In back of the bead tie in a partridge hackle feather. Take 2 or 3 turns of hackle to form the collar. Whip finish or half hitch the thread in back of the bead. Cut away the thread. Cement the tie off thread wraps being careful not to apply cement to the collar fibers.

(Officer Terry McCormack is with the Pensacola Florida Highway Patrol and Fly Fisheds of Northwest Florida).



FCFFer Greg Howick's First Grass Caught Red.
Greg Fished Last Month with Mike McQuiston



Top left: Robert Benardo and Lew Holliday hit top speed in the ICW; Left: Bill Wilson with redfish from last month's outing. Top right: Woody Hubbards hooks a red in St. Augustine spartina; Bottom right: David Lambert explains cast to Bill Wilson as Larry Holder casts and John Adams chats.



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