

First Coast Fly Fisher

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www.fcff.org

December 2007



Daughter and Daddy -- Megan James Grins as Daddy Troy Shows The First Flounder She's Brought to the Net. Below, Megan Learns from Casting Guru Mac Brown at the FCFF Fall Casting Clinic.

MEETING & SPEAKER

Mon Dec. 3 Meeting --
Speaker Chris Holleman,

Chris is a licensed captain and local guide who is now an officer with the FWC. Come learn about the new fish limits, and new policies and practices from our fish and wildlife guys.

COMING EVENTS

**New Moon Dec 9; Full
Moon Dec 23**

Monday, Dec 3 -- FCFF General meeting. Come Hear Florida Fish and Wildlife Officer Chris Holleman. Meeting at 7 p.m.

Saturday, Feb 2 -- FCFF Fly fishing clinic and banquet. This year's guest speakers will be the exceptional team of Terry and Roxanne Wilson. See page 6 for more information.



Photo: Woody Huband

Fly Fishing and Podcasts?



Zach Matthew's Itinerant Angler Internet Site Plays Excellent Flyfishing Podcasts

Adapted from Chris Morris – Taken from the Arkansas Fly Fishers Newsletter & FFF Clubwire Sept. 2007

So, if you have been hiding under a rock somewhere since the iPod craze, you are probably wondering what is a Podcast? According to Wikipedia, a podcast is “is a digital media file, or a series of such files, that is distributed over the Internet using syndication feeds for playback on portable media players and personal computers.”

WHAT? For all of you non techies, think of a podcast as internet radio. Why do you care about podcasts? What if you could listen to your favorite fly fishing legend or expert over and over as he discusses his experience developing as a professional fly fisherman! Guess what, you can!

Fly Fish Radio <<http://www.flyfishradio.com>> is the original podcast for fly fishing anglers. My favorite episodes from this site feature Norm Albiston. Mr. Albiston is a well respected Fly Fishing Instructor and guide.

In Episode 1, Norm talks about midges, matching insects underwater, and the biggest mistake fly fish anglers make.

In Episode 5, Norm returns from Episode 1 to finish his thought on the 5 things you can change when fly fishing. “Norm has a talent for taking the complication and technical point of fly fishing and breaking it down so it’s easy to digest.”

Ask About Fly Fishing Radio Internet Radio. Ask About “has brought together The Experts on fly fishing to tell you in their own words the secrets to their success in both fresh and Saltwater!” <<http://www.askaboutflyfishing.com>>

Another podcast fly site deserves more than a passing mention are Itinerant Angler <<http://itinernatangler.com>>, run by Zach Matthews. Zach offers interviews with the biggest names in the world of fly fishing, from Kreh, Borger, Juracsik, and Blanton, to TFO president Rick Pope, Marshall Cutchin, line designer/casting great Bruce Richards, and Brian o’Keefe, just to mention a few. An excellent, ‘though untrained, interviewer, Zach’s podcasts are some of the most informative in the business.

Check out the above web sites: you will find them as yet another fantastic resource. Beginners, intermediates, and experts will learn from these various interviews.

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Pallot's Prince of Tides

(Adapted from Suncoast Fly Fishers Newsletter, written by editor Paul Sequira)

Several years ago, SFF had Flip Pallot as the guest speaker at our annual banquet; he also spent Saturday morning with us at the Antelope Club for fly casting demos and general fishing talk. Flip mentioned that

his favorite fly for redfish

was his "Prince of Tide". Lefty Kreh, in his revised edition of "Saltwater Flies" also said it is an excellent all around pattern for many saltwater species. Lefty doesn't describe it as a bendback but the photo in his book shows a bendback hook. Flip also told us that he ties it as a bendback; he also said he frequently ties it with a single wire weedguard. It is a simple fly to tie

Materials:

- Hook: 34007 size 1 to 3/0 or equivalent
- Thread: Brown 3/0 Monochord
- Body: Copper Krystal Flash and gold Flashabou over-wrapped with 12 or 15 # mono
- Wing: (bottom to top) white bucktail, green or olive bucktail and brown bucktail, copper Krystal Flash

Tying Instructions:

1. Pinch down the barb of your hook and then secure the eye of the hook in your pliers with the hook point up and with your thumb inserted into the hook bend, apply gentle downward pressure to create your bend back hook. You should have approximately 3/16" of straight hook shank and then a slight downward bend towards the hook bend with the point up.
2. Tie the mono in under the hook shank starting slightly behind the straight portion behind the hook eye and tie off at the hook bend. Leave approximately four inches of mono hanging.
3. Secure several strands of copper Krystal Flash and gold Flashabou (approximately 3 of each) at the bend of the hook and spiral the thread up to the point where you started the



Flip Pallot's Hook-up Streamer, Prince of Tides

mono. Slightly twist the Flashabou and Krystal Flash into a loose rope and wrap it up the hook shank to the waiting thread. Tie off and discard excess flash material. Tightly wrap the mono up the hook

shank completely covering the flash material and tie off at the waiting thread.

4. The wing is built with three layers of bucktail, white, topped with green (or olive)

and then topped with brown. Each layer of bucktail should be approximately the thickness of a wooden matchstick when compacted and stretched.

Finally, top it all with eight to ten strands of copper Krystal Flash which should extend about 1/4" beyond the bucktail. The total wing should be about 1 1/2 to 2 times the length of the hook. Wrap a neat bullet shaped head and whip finish, add yellow eyes with a black center, either painted or stick-on. Overcoat the head with a good hard clear finish. Note: I have seen this fly in local fishing publications slightly modified with a topping of black bucktail over the copper flash and then some gold flash over all. Also on a straight hook rather than a bendback. I think the pattern as described in

Lefty's book (and above) is more accurate to the original. A note on the body: You could also wrap the mono over the flash material using the easy nail knot method; or, I prefer to coat the Krystal Flash/Flashabou body with epoxy rather than mono. It adds a little weight to the fly and offers more protection; I do this on all my bendbacks or straight hook minnow imitations using an assembly line method. I finish about a dozen bodies and then mix up a batch of epoxy rod wrap finish. I then coat all the bodies with the epoxy and place them on my turning wheel for approximately three hours. I let the epoxy completely cure overnight and then complete the flies the next day or as time permits. I also do this for the fly heads after applying the eyes. This makes for a much more durable and attractive fly.PS

History of Fly Tackle

People have known for 1000s of years: There is nothing quite as sublime as spending many a happy hour luring a wily, old fish from the depths of a stream with a rod, a line, and an artfully tied fly.

Author Unknown

The first clear description of fly-fishing appeared in *De Animalium Natura*, nearly 2000 years ago, when Claudius Aelianus reported that “fishermen wind red wool around their hooks and fasten to the wool two feathers that grow under a cock’s wattles.”

The first English book on fly fishing was written by Dame Juliana Berners in 1496: *Treatise of Fishing with an Angle*, which contained a wealth of practical angling advice and details on equipment. As the Abbess of the Sopwell Priory, Berners cast flies and wrote between prayers. She described the rod as having two parts: a ‘staffe’ or butt, and a ‘croppre’ or top. The butt was made of hazel or rowan, cut between Michaelmas and Candlemas (that is, in the winter), and was six feet long or more.

As thick as your arm and evenly tapered, it was tied to a straight piece of wood and heated in an oven until it had thoroughly dried in the smoke. The pith was burnt out with a hot iron rod, and the finished butt was hollow and evenly tapered inside, with a broad ferrule of brass or iron at each end. The top of the rod—another six feet or so—was carried inside the butt, and generally had a lower part of green hazel spliced to an upper shoot of blackthorn, crabtree, medlar or juniper.

The line was no more than twice as long as the rod, attached to a loop at the rod’s tip. Without a reel, you play the fish with the bend of the long, light, flexible rod to relieve the line of the strain: if the fish is not kept under the curve of the rod, the line breaks. Lines were made of twisted or braided horsehair, and Juliana advocated varying thicknesses from a single hair for a minnow to fifteen hairs for salmon. Avid fly fishers made lines that tapered from 12 or 15 hairs down to a casting line of one, two, or at most three hairs thick, and for the next two hundred years or so, the required thickness of the horsehair line was hotly debated. “A man who could not kill a trout twenty inches long with a double hair deserves not the name



of angler.”(1651) www.fishingexpo.com

Of all the equipment described in *Treatise on Fishing with an Angle*, only the flies—which were designed to match the hatches throughout the season—are unchanged. Of the twelve flies described by Dame Berners, some are still used today. Those first dozen flies, codified on the banks of the

River Ver in Hertfordshire, were adopted by Izaak Walton in *The Compleat Angler* (1653, with over 400 editions to date), who breathed life and soul into the fine art of fly fishing. Walton wrote at a time when trout were fished with a single or double handed rod up to 20 feet long and made of six to eight pieces spliced together. The rods tapered like a switch and played with a true bend down to the hand, and the length was required until reels allowed anglers to use more modest lengths.

Plain barrel winders of brass were known in the 1600s, but reels didn’t become common until the line itself improved. Fishing line was made of braided horsehair or horsehair and silk until the 1800s, when braiding machines were refined and cotton and flax lines were made.

The reels of that time were versatile and unspecialized: a big one held 200 or more yards of heavy line, and leaders were generally made from silkworm gut. Drawn from the bowels of a silkworm, gut made fine, extremely strong leaders that were four to nine feet long, readily available by the 1800s. By the turn of the century, oiled-silk line had become standard flyfishing equipment.

The taper in the line was usually produced manually, with one woman watching six to eight braiding machines that took several hours to make a line. When the line was complete, it was soaked in linseed oil, dried in an oven, roughed up by hair brushes, polished with stone wheels, again and again: sixteen times for good line and

(continued on page 5)

‘Homemade rods of hazel, crab tree and juniper were replaced by limber wood--greenheart, lancewood and bamboo.’

up to 24 times for superior line... a process that took six months from start to finish. The line had to be dried after use and required periodic oiling, but compared to horsehair it worked miraculously well. As soon as the line was perfected the choice of reels became very broad, from reliable workhorse reels to reels of exceptional beauty and precision.

Homemade rods of hazel, crab tree and juniper disappeared when the British colonies started shipping such limber exotics as greenheart, lancewood and bamboo. The separate parts of a rod were generally spliced together with a little hemp string wound around joint and anchored to pins on each part until the 1800s, when metal working was industrialized and ferrules became common. About the same time, British rodmakers noted that the outer layer of bamboo has very high fiber density, and by splitting the canes and taking long thin strips of the outer layer, six or eight strips can be glued together to make a rod that completely outperformed the heavier wooden rods for anything less than a salmon. The rods were typically wrapped every inch or so with a few turns of red thread to reinforce the glue, and the handle was usually cork. With the arrival of heavier silk lines and lighter cane poles, the fly fisher of a century ago was casting with great finesse, and tournament casters regularly hit eighty feet or more.

Fly fishing equipment and casting technique was generally designed to float the fly above the water in a manner that imitates nature closely enough to fool an old fish. Flies were often designed to mimic specific insects, but some useful flies bear no recognized resemblance to any living creature. The Victorian era was renowned for their exuberantly hued fancy flies. At times the position of the fly on the water, its action, the size of the fly and its form are seen to be more important than the color and shape of the fly, so the flies themselves have long ranged from drab to gaudy. Most important, they caught fish!

By the turn of the century modern fly fishing theory was being debated in England through the observations and experiments of fly fishermen like Halford and Skues. Fiberglass rods became available in the 1940s, first built of fiberglass over a wood core. A variety of solid and hollow rods followed, and hollow became standard rod construction. Graphite rods were introduced in 1973,



and the new rods caused a sensation: lighter, smaller in diameter and stronger than fiberglass, they added to the average anglers casting distance.

Synthetic materials revolutionized the fly line as well. After WWII, a polyvinyl chloride (PVC) coating was applied to a core of braided nylon (now the most common), dacron or even fiberglass. First the core was tapered, then the coating itself could be tapered, and there were virtually limitless possibilities in line characteristics. Weight-forward lines, with the front

ends heavier for distance casting, have been around for generations, but now there are a greater variety of tapers, including very blunt, fast “saltwater tapers” for large flies.

Nylon has completely displaced horsehair and silkworm gut for leaders. Better equipment has opened new vistas for fly fishing. The power of fiberglass and graphite rods, along with stronger reels, line and leaders, now allows anglers to catch and land very large fish, regularly. It was probably in the 1970’s and 1980’s, however, that interest in fly fishing virtually exploded. Books, videos, classes, magazines and catalogs brought instant knowledge to a new generation of fly fishers.

The school of hard knocks approach to learning fly fishing was replaced overnight as specialty fly fishing shops introduced newcomers to the sport. Improved fly tying materials and methods became commonly available and a growing understanding of insect behaviour began to demystify some arcane aspects of the fly fishing challenge. Modern equipment has enhanced fly fishing, but the essence of the adventure is the same today as it was in Roman times: a rod, a line and an artfully tied fly cast to an elusive fish. But the adventure is not always the same. The explosion of knowledge and interest in fly fishing is not without its consequences. More leisure time, more discretionary income, and greatly improved transportation have led to overcrowding on some of our finest trout streams. Overfishing, pollution, river obstructions, and fisheries mismanagement have produced a situation in which we often find more people sharing in a diminished resource. We should all remind fellow fly fishermen that we individually need to play a role in preserving the fishing experience, that indefinable quality that helps to fill our spirit.

Terry & Roxanne Wilson at FCFF Banquet, Feb. 2

First Coast Fly Fishers is proud to announce that we will bring internationally recognized warmwater flyfishing and fly tying experts **Terry and Roxanne Wilson** to speak at the 2008 FCFF banquet, Saturday, Feb 2. The Wilson's will also conduct a free-to-members half-day clinic on bass and panfish. The clinic will include fly



Nationally Acclaimed Fly Fishing & Tying Experts Terry and Roxanne Wilson

tying, rigging and knots, and methods of approaching warmwater fish.

The Wilsons have authored numerous books on bass, smallmouth, and pan fish fishing. They are popular and highly sought after speakers throughout North America. Their articles on fly fishing and fly tying appear regularly in magazines like *Flyfishing and Fly Tying Journal*, *Bassmaster*, *Flyfishing Quarterly*, *Fly Tyer*, *Fly Fish America*, *Warmwater Fly Fishing*, and many more.

The Wilsons have been the recipients of numerous awards for their contributions to the sport of fly fishing.

This year's banquet chair is Dr. Larry Holder. The banquet will offer nearly \$7,000 in gifts, drawings, and bid items. Grand prizes will be announced in the December newsletter.

Don't forget to mark down the date – Saturday, Feb. 2 The day before the Superbowl.



FCFFers **Jeff Clarkson** and **Bill Easterday** caught these nice trout the first weekend of November in the Davidson River, NC. The pair caught a 20" Rainbow trout and a 24" Brown trout. The fish were caught on a #16 Pheasant Tail Nymph on a 5x tipt

2008 Officers and Board Elected



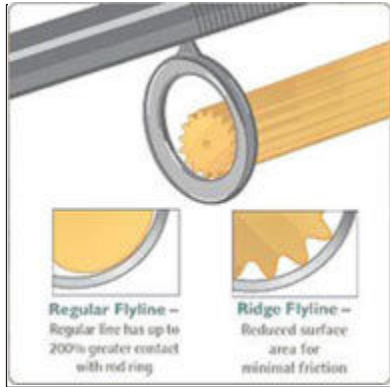
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Ridge or Sharkskin

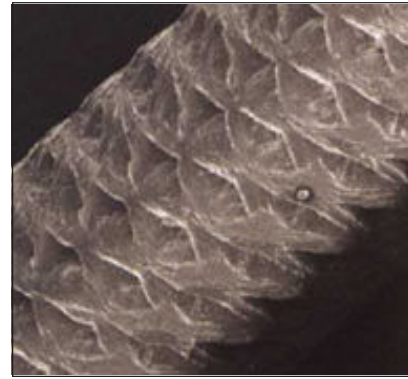
New Generation Lines Cost More, But Zip Through The Guides

by David Lambert

Last year Airflo fly lines came out with the first truly revolutionary line design in decades — the Ridge Line. I don't count the new super slick coating as revolutionary, regardless of what the PR guys say. Until the Ridge, contemporary line coatings have generally been uniformly round and smooth. They made full contact with line guides as they passed through and they reflected light (called flashing). This increased line friction and slowed down the cast. Line flash telegraphed unwanted information to the fish.



Airflo's Ridge Flyline



Scientific Anglers' Sharkskin Flyline

Airflo's new Ridge is not flat but, uh, ridged, which means the surface is made of parallel micro-ridges which run the length of the line, as in the **photo to the left**.

The ridges reduce friction; that really does let you shoot more line. It's great stuff. Airflo also added a new power core to minimize stretch and improve flotation. Read more here http://www.flylines.com/Flylines_AirfloFlylineRange_Fresh_Ridge.cfm

This year Scientific Anglers has one-upped Airflo with their new Sharkskin Lines. Sharkskin Lines are based on new *lotus effect* research which creates a micro-geometric pattern around the circumference of the line. As with the Airflo Ridge, SciAngler's Sharkskin greatly reduces surface friction, which in theory, will give you longer casts. **See photo at right**.

Read more here http://solutions.3m.com/wps/portal/3M/en_US/Scientific_Anglers/Fly-Fishing/Products/WhatsNew/

Both lines claim reduced line flash, higher flotation, and reduced memory, but the Airflo ridge comes with a 5-year 'No Crack' warranty. SciAnglers maintains that their new line doesn't change characteristics in warm or cold water. This could be a real improvement. The real rub comes with price. Sharkskin lines cost a cool C-note, while the Airflo Ridge weighs in at \$70, but both

companies say the lines will last as much as 3 times longer than their earlier offerings.

I've only thrown the Airflo line, and I was impressed. I'll try to get a couple of demo lines to play when I do the FCFF Fall Casting Day with Mac Brown. If not then, aqt least by the

FCFF banquet date. BTW, Mac stood the casting world on its collective ear with his book *Casting Angles*. He's perceived worldwide as a true fly casting evolutionary.

Bring any and all casting questions to the December meeting. Both lines have new uber-slick coatings, but the SA Sharkskin claims its line sloughs dirt like a lotus leaf, citing incorporation of technology utilizing studies of lotus leaf and flower. See this wiki for some really fascinating info on lotus effect http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lotus_effect.

See also this cool lotus effect video <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:LotuseffectAnimation.ogg#file>

Here's aq question" will those news patterned coatings rub raw your stripping finger? As to stripping finger rub, all I can offer is a guess. SA says they see no microscopic wear to line guides after 1 million passes. My guess is that reduced guide friction would apply to the stripping finger as well, although my guess is surely flawed.

The Airflo Ridge would rub less as it passes your finger, but the true test will be in the using of these lines.

My concern is this: Do we really need these improvement? Is it just one more thing that will give the unskilled angler an upper hand. There should be an element of time-on-water (observational) learning to this sport.

And there's the cost issue, of course.

How To Build A Tin Canoe

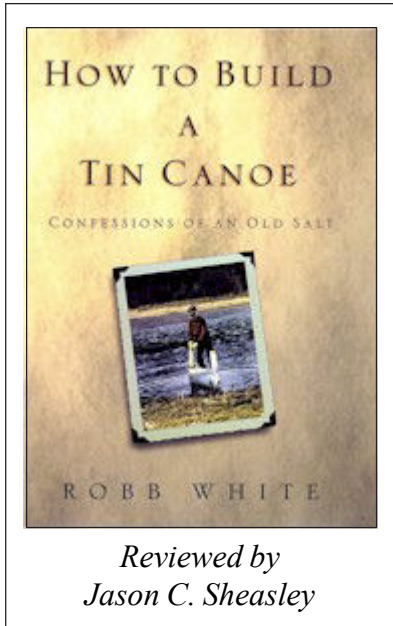
**How to Build A Tin Canoe:
Confessions of an Old Salt**

Robb White, SBN-10: 1401300278;
Hyperion (May 2003)

The ultimate feat for a self-sufficient angler must be to catch a fish caught on a fly you tied, using a rod you wrapped, from a boat you built. Maybe when I retire I'll have time to engage in such auspicious activities. Until then, I will be content reading *How to Build a Tin Canoe*, the memoir of self-taught boat builder Robb White from Thomasville, Georgia. Growing up during World War II, Robb, his siblings and assorted cousins explored the wetlands and waters of South Georgia and the Florida Gulf Coast from sunup to sundown. It was during this time than Robb built his first boat constructed of tin from the roof of a chicken coop. From those early beginnings, Robb became one of the most sought after wooden boat builders in the country. Along the way he supplemented his boatbuilding endeavors by serving a stint in the Navy, taking a number of odd jobs, earning a degree in oceanography, and teaching high school. He complemented his boatbuilding passion by publishing stories in such periodicals of *Wooden Boat* and *Messing About in Boats*.

Robb was born into a literary family. His father, Rob White, III, made a living writing young adult adventure novels (e.g. *Deathwatch*, *Up Periscope* and *Survivor*) and television scripts in the 1950s and 60s. His sister Bailey White is an author in her own right and a regular radio commentator for National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*. Like most old salts, White amassed a sea bag full of half-truths and tales some of the best of which are compiled in this book. In his own folksy, literate way White's stories contain plenty of talk about boats, boat construction and his evolution as a boat builder. His stories also tell of fishing and exploring the Gulf Coast from boats of his own creation.

The stories collected in this book recall a simpler time. They are tempered with ruminations on such varying topics as the demise of Enron, rich Yankee cousins wintering in the South,



and the invasion of Florida's Gulf Coast by unscrupulous developers. These stories tell the tale of a southern renaissance man with a deep appreciation for nature and wooden boats. They also reveal a man who ardently resisted the changes occurring in the world around him. Robb's passion for boat building, his family and a vanishing southern lifestyle shines through in his writing. You can almost smell the salt air, varnish and engine oil when writes of motoring among the islands of the Gulf Coast in one of his wooden boats. You can feel the mud between your toes when Robb writes of his early days tromping around the marshes and coastline of Dog Island, FL when he was young.

The title of this book is somewhat of a misnomer. White relates the process of building a tin canoe as he did as a child. But, this is not a book on boat construction and design. However, one could easily be inspired to enter a life of boat building after finishing the book's 228 pages. At a minimum, it will make you to contemplate forgoing fiberglass and needless electronics in favor of the simplistic and elegant styling of a wooden boat. As an added incentive, White's stories provide glimpse of Florida (and the South), which has regrettably has vanished from an ever changing landscape. As fly anglers it is easy to relate Robb's appreciation for the natural world and handcrafted wooden boats.

Sadly, Robb White died on May 16, 2006 of complications during surgery. He was known as a traditionalist as well as an innovator in the wooden boat circles. His boats, which were constructed of wood he harvested himself, are a lasting testament to his craftsmanship. His website (www.robbwhite.com) is still maintained. There you can view pictures of his wooden creations, read some more of his stories and order plans for his Sport Boat. Matt Murphy, editor of *Wooden Boat* magazine has a great article on Robb on his web site http://wbeditor.typepad.com/rudderpost/2006/05/robb_white_arti.html



Mac Brown Day Photos by Woody Huband



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