

# Fly Fisher

First Coast

First Coast Fly Fishers

[www.fcff.org](http://www.fcff.org)

June 2008



*Woody Huband Big St. Johns Big Copperhead*

## MEETING & SPEAKER

**Monday, June 2** -- FCFF Meeting, 7 p.m. Jacksonville Marriott, off Salisbury Road. Speaker -- Justin Solomon. Justin works for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and will discuss his fish data collection efforts and tell us what the data means regarding fly fishing in the area. He'll also provide us with general fishing information on the estuarine fish of the region, and of course some pictures of the unusual/large catches he has had over the years.

## COMING EVENTS

**New Moon -- Monday, June 3, Full Moon, June 8**  
**Saturday -- June 7 Practical Casting Day with David Lambert** -- Join FCFFers for at M & M Dairy for a full-on day of learning practical casting technique for our area and the type of fishing we do. Assisting are casting instructor Dick Michaelson and newly certified FFF Instructor Rich Santos. Casting contest with prizes at the end of day.  
**Sat/Sun, June 14-15 - Fish North Mosquito Lagoon.** Launch from Riverbreeze Park boat ramp near Oak Hill. More info at [www.fcff-form.org](http://www.fcff-form.org) and at the June meeting.



*Two Casters, Six Rods, Six Loops*

David Lambert and fellow instructor Todd Rodgers with a Hollywood-type demo.

### ***Cast Better. Join Us at FCFF's First Practical Casting Day Saturday, June 7***

Want to cast better? Be more accurate? Throw longer lines? Come to FCFF's Practical Casting Day on Saturday, June 7, 9 a.m., at Doug and Theresa Moore's M & M Dairy.

Join fellow FCFFers for a free practical local casting day with master instructor David Lambert. He will discuss, demonstrate, and diagnose casting techniques specifically aimed at fishing our area. Lambert is a nationally recognized instructor who has assisted casting notables such as Lefty Kreh, Bob Clouser, Mel Krieger, Jon Cave, Ed Jaworowski, Mac Brown and many others. Assisting Lambert this year will be expert caster Dick Michaelson and our newest FFF-certified casting instructor Rich Santos.

We will have a variety of TFO rods on hand to test, including the new TFO Axiom. ***FCFF Practical Casting Day is free to FCFF members. Lunch and drinks will be provided.***

Lambert and crew demo and teach techniques for:

- *Wind Casting* – Casting into a headwind; casting with wind from either side; casting with a tailwind
- *Casting Accuracy* – Techniques and practice suggestions on how controlling where and how you fly should land, for both short and longer casts
- *Distance Casting* – Distance comes when you do everything else right. Lambert will demo, discuss, and diagnose distance concepts, problems, and offer some productive practice routines for increasing your casting distance. Lambert will demo and teach the 'square-cast' distance technique.
- *Grass Casting* – The Reds-in-the-Grass season is soon upon us. Learn quick pickup and other grass techniques that will help improve your grass fishing catch ratio.
- *Roll Casts and Distance Roll Casts* – A roll cast is a much needed weapon in your casting quiver. It's a valuable in saltwater as in fresh water.
- *General Practice Techniques* – Techniques and methods to guarantee casting improvement
- *Building and Using Quick Leaders* – Which leader is really necessary and how to build them. Hand-on. Club will provide all materials.
- *Casting Courses and Fun-For-All Casting Competition* – the club will have a couple of casting courses at which members can test their new found casting skills at. A fun end-of-the-day casting competition on these courses. Prizes will be awarded for the winners. No instructors allowed to compete.

***Sign up at the June meeting, or contact Rob Benardo [rob@flyyaker.com](mailto:rob@flyyaker.com)***

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# Shadow Caster Speaks: *Nature of Fly Casting* *Breaking Casting into Component Parts*

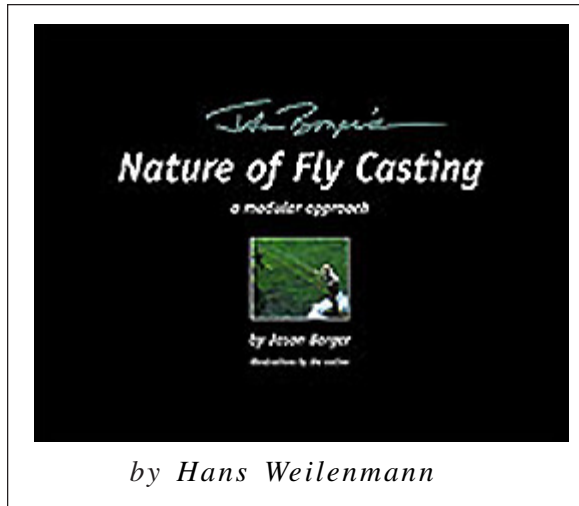
*Nature of Fly Casting – A Modular Approach*, By Jason Borger; Published by Shadow Caster Press, 2001; 296 pp; softcover; ISBN 0-9711570-0-6

In *Nature of Fly Casting* author Jason Borger sets himself an ambitious task. Any author of a book, which is to serve as an instructional text on a subject requiring muscle coordination and fine motor skills, is faced with a number of substantial obstacles to overcome. I was very interested to read how Jason Borger would tackle these issues in *Nature of Fly Casting*.

The approach selected, indeed the major premise on which the book is built, is that the full array of casting motions can be broken down into component parts, or modules, which in turn may be broken down into smaller modules. In the author's words: "The Modular Approach is really a text-enhanced symbolic language for the reading and writing of fly casting." . . . . . "It can be applied universally, not just to this book. Learning the language is easy, but you first need to think of every core skill in fly casting and line handling as a separate module."

Once the modules are defined, they may be plugged together in a variety of ways (parallel and/or sequential) to achieve a specific casting skill, similar to the way nouns and verbs are joined to form a complete and flowing sentence. The minor premise is that individual modules, once understood and practiced, may be used and reused in various combinations to expand on the angler's casting arsenal and skills set. Supported by the modular concept the author covers in detail a wide range of casts, such as the roll cast, single and double spey casts, the reach cast, and line control skills, such as various hauling techniques, aerial and water mends, and others.

How well does this format work? I believe this will very much depend on the individual reader. The nearly 300 page book is laid out in a very structured manner, and the physical format is with an open spine which allows the book to lie flat and remain open, allowing execution of the pantomime exercises without the book closing on the reader. The text is supported



with a large number of line drawings by the author and some graphs. There are no photographs, which may be seen as a disadvantage by more visually oriented readers. The drawings complement the text very well, adding a strong visual reinforcement. The caster depicted is obviously modelled after Jason's dad, Gary, and their common compact casting style. This makes for consistency in the drawings, but is perhaps somewhat restrictive. The text recognizes

this and makes clear that there are a wide variety of alternative casting styles which the reader may find more suitable to their physique and abilities.

Reading the chapters in a sequential order is recommended by the author to get the best understanding and, since most chapters will build on material from preceding chapters, this is good advice.

Modules and Small Modules are introduced and explained, often with associated illustrations, and concluded with a module summary. This generally takes the form of briefly placing the Small Module into context, following with an explanation, and concluding with a Module summary. Here is a sample of how one of the shorter Small Module sections starts off: "The Pause Module (SM) —The pause between the Overhead Backcast Module and the

Overhead Forward Cast Module is a vital one. Indeed, the pause between any aerialized backcast and forward cast modules is a vital one. The Pause Module is the time when the line aerialized by the backcast is allowed to unroll behind the caster so it can be cast forward." . . . "Ideally, the line should reach its maximum rear extension (just finished unrolling) at exactly the same moment that Phase One of the forward cast is begun."

One of the major difficulties faced by authors of instructional texts is the lack of real-time feedback from the reader. Personal casting instruction, such as a casting clinic, provides the instructor with feedback on whether a student connects with the explanations or examples. This opportunity to restructure the delivery for better understanding of the topic is necessarily

*(continued on page 5)*

# Foam Face Dahlburg Diver

I like to spin deer hair. However, sometimes it can take a little more time spinning the hair to tie a fly than I'd like to spend. There is a trick I use to shorten the time it takes to tie a Dahlburg Diver: foam. The shortcut involves the use of a #8 popper purchased at the fly shop. I epoxy the popper in backwards—voila, the Foam Face Dahlburg Diver. This method makes it easy to finish the fly and shape the body. Fish this fly as you would any topwater floater/diver fly. I have chosen colors for this fly description for no particular reason, so feel free to mix it up.

**Materials:**

Hook: Mustad 34011, #4; Thread: Denier 210, color not that important; Tail: Your choice, here I've chosen several grizzly hackles with flashabou tied on either side; Collar: Chartreuse saddle hackle (two); Body: Tan Deer belly hair; Head: #8 preformed foam popper; Eyes: 5 mm doll's eyes (these double as a rattle); Adhesive: Super Glue gel or epoxy.

**Directions:**

Attach the thread onto the hook near the bend. Attach your chosen tail material and add the flash. Here I have 4 grizzly hackles just tied onto the top of the shank at the bend with the flash tied on either side.

Next, tie in together two strung saddle hackles, curving rearward. To form the collar, palmer the feather forward about



*by Bart Isaac*

3 to 5 turns—just enough to cover the grizzle hackle tie in point.

Then, I cut a clump of deer belly hair from the skin. I clean out the underfur. For the first clump, I leave the tips in place. Cosmetically, I like the way the deer hair tips look over the feathers to form the collar. I spin two more clumps of deer hair—I trim the tips off of these two clumps before

spinning. Pack these tight, build up the rest of the shank with thread and whip finish. Now, there should be enough space left on the shank to nicely accommodate the popper in reverse as a slider.

I use 5 minute epoxy to glue the foam head into place. I do this by coating the thread covered shank with epoxy and sliding the foam head onto the top of the shank. Then, I rotate my vice so that the fly is upside down,



filling the gap in the foam with epoxy.

When the epoxy cures, I use a double edge razor blade (be careful!) to trim the deer hair. I start on the bottom and remove the hair, using the foam body as a guide. On the



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## *Nature of Fly Casting*

*(from page 3)*

missing from any text. In *Nature of Fly Casting* Jason Borger attempts to address this issue by utilizing the alternate phrasings and explanations of a wide range of other casting instructors, such as Bruce Richards, Mel Krieger, Joan Wulff, and Simon Gawesworth, complementing his own explanation.

While there is a sprinkling of dry, often self-deprecating humor, throughout the text, this is also very much a self-study book. The text is a mixture of semi-scientific phrasing and more down to earth expansion on the subject covered, but Jason Borger presents his case in a very articulate manner.

Although the book lacks the photography sequences of teaching texts such as Ed Jaworowski's *The Cast* and the convincing easy going conversational approach of Mel Krieger's *The Essence of Fly Casting*, *Nature of Fly Casting* drills down deep as well as wide by sharing with the reader the underlying fundamentals, the foundation on which casting skills are built.

The spirit of the book is defined very succinctly by the author when he states, "How do you spell fly casting? C-O-N-T-R-O-L. Control is the key word in all of fly casting."

While the *Nature of Fly Casting* spans the full breadth of casting skills and casts to cover all likely conditions, it is not a book for everyone. The text is geared toward serious students of casting - those with a tendency to ask the 'why' questions - and it should be considered a 'must read' for present and aspiring casting instructors. Personally I enjoyed the book very much.

*Hans Weilenmann is a FFF-Europe Certified Master Casting Instructor and a member of the FFFEurope program Advisory Board. He is keenly interested in all matters related to casting technique, as well as coaching methodology.*



*Happy Troy by Rich Santos*

## Dahlberg Diver

*(from page 4)*



top and sides, I only take off a small amount. Then with my scissors I trim the collar to keep the traditional Dahlberg Diver characteristics. This "fan" shape allows the fly to push water and cause the bubbling effect when stripped. If desired, you could coat this deer hair "fan" with head cement for durability against the water. Again, I take care not to trim the tips of that first clump of spun deer hair.

To finish the fly, I attach the eyes with super glue gel. You can add a gill mark behind the eye with a red marker if you like.



*Cracked Clay by Woody Huband*

# Stripers on the Roanoke

*Everyone Caught Fish on Annual Striper Excursion*

FCFFers Dennis and Martha Jammes drove 527 miles in just under 9 ½ hours to meet Bud Larsen and Dick Choate at the Weldon, NC, Days Inn on May 4. While this was the second Roanoke River striper trip for the Jammes, Larsen and Choate were old hands at fishing this big North Carolina tailwater.

This year the water was about 4 feet higher than last year, as they were releasing more water from the dam; the water was running somewhat faster than last year, also. This time of year, the Roanoke is a catch-and-release river. The state implements C & R usually on May 1. As a result, the boat traffic a lot less congested, although you may still see 100 boats from within 2 miles of the



*by Dennis Jammes*

ramp. These boats will, for the most part, drift down for a mile or 2 then crank up, come back close to the ramp and start their drift again. Some years it is possible to catch 100 fish per boat on a given day. This year the catch was less. Dick Choate had 77 stripers boated in 3 days. I do not have a report on how many Bud Larsen caught, but I think it was more than I caught (which was 23 fish in 3 days). Most of the fish are 20 inches or less, I had one that wnet 24

inches (see picture). Choate had one that he did not measure (see picture). One morning, the state game and fish people tagged more than 1238 stripers. A few of them were estimated to weigh over 38 pounds.

The best method for catching these stripers is drift the boat from just below the ramp to a mile or so down the river, casting from either side of the boat( it makes no difference if it is toward the bank or middle of the river) as you drift. Use your trolling motor only for correcting your drift, after you drift as far as you like crank up your motor and come back to the starting point and go again.

We use a 9-weight rod with 325 or 350 grain sinking line, a large Clouser with 1/20 oz. eyes. The fly should have a lot of flash and be as large as you can handle casting. Early in the morning let the fly sink about 5 to 10 seconds, then strip in a pronounced jerking motion as fast as you can. As it gets later in the day let the fly sink for about 20 to 30 seconds and use the same retrieve.

Early mornings are definitely the most productive time for striper fishing on the Roanoke. By 11 a.m. we load the boats back on the trailers and have lunch, a nap (maybe tie a few flies). We are back in the river about 4 p.m. and fish until dark.



*Martha Jammes*

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# 'Stripers Spawn When Water Is Between 68 & 70 F'

(continued from page 6)

After a day or so with the 9 weight some people change to a 7 or 8 weight rod (your arm can only take so much), but you generally have to change to a smaller fly and/or line, although it is still a blast, the productivity is not as good.

Last year we caught as many fish anchored as we caught drifting, but this year anchoring was less productive. While anchored Martha used a 7 ft ML spinning rod with a topwater diving plug (Long A bomber) as she does not fly fish (see picture). I took all the treble hooks off and attached long shank 3/0 on the rear (regulations require all tackle to have single hook with no barb).



Dick Choate

The flies we used are red and white, blue and white, orange, pink and white, green and white but have a lot of flash (about 15 to 20 strands). The fly shop in Gaston, N.C. sells flies using a lot of red crystal flash. The shop is run by Bobby Colston and is about 5 or 6 miles from the river. Call them for information: 252 537-6485.

The river is situated with heavy timber on both sides, so the wind usually isn't any problem. This year, the water temperature was 67,

rising to 70 late in the afternoon. The spawning takes place with temperatures between 68 and 70. The water was stained. I don't know of any time there were not at least a dozen fish on my depth finder.

The weather some mornings was in the 50's and the river itself would be very foggy as the air temperature was so much colder than the water, but it would get up in the 80's during the day.

Although the locals know you are from out of town they are very friendly and will be glad to assist in any way they can. There is a non-resident license required, a 10 day license is \$10 and can be obtained at the 24

hour Wal-Mart about 1/2 mile from the Days Inn (or by going online to [http://www.ncwildlife.org/fs\\_index\\_01\\_license.htm](http://www.ncwildlife.org/fs_index_01_license.htm). The Days Inn, in building 2 and 3, has accommodations for your boat including plug for your battery chargers.

You may want to put this on your calendar for next May, as I said before it is a blast.



## Buster

### A Bone Fide 'Brim' Hound

From Mike McQuiston

The last meeting of the *Monday Night Bream Jerking and Libation Society* convened in Picolata after many of the members heard claims of large numbers of huge shellcrackers and copperheads being caught in the area. We pushed off from John Adams' dock about 4 p.m. and met up with Bill Lott at a secret location on the west side of the St. Johns. Sheltered from a strong west wind, the gang waded the shore line working fall-downs, weed lines and docks with popping bugs and unweighted wet flies. Jumping on the uncanny points of Buster, the bream hound, success was immediate. The action continued right up to the beautiful St. Johns sunset and beyond, with over 40 fish brought to hand by the assembled gang members. The life of a fisherman, even a lowly bream jerker, is good.



*Common Egret on Intracoastal Waterway by Rich Santos*

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