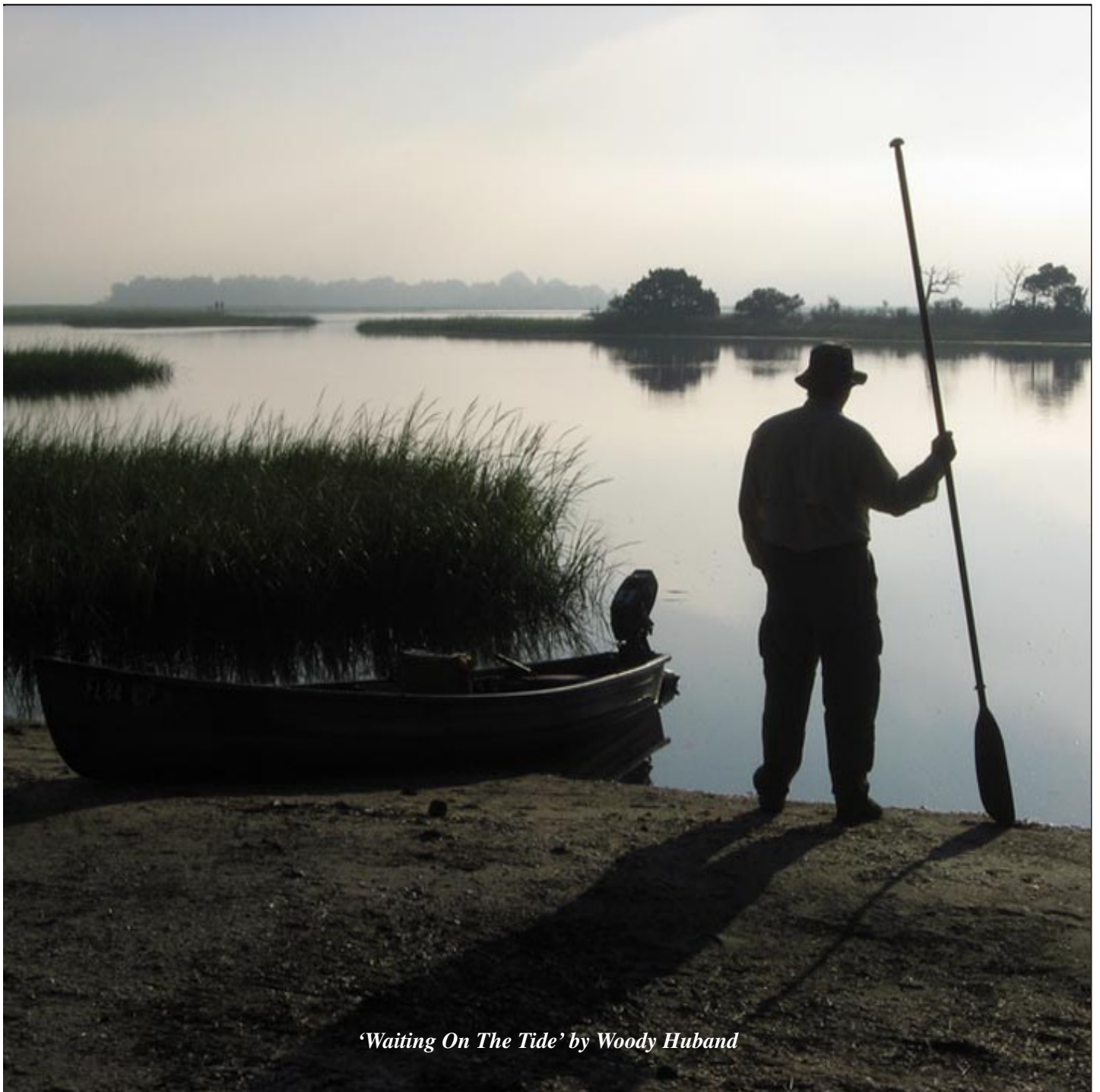


FIRST COAST FLY FISHER

NOVEMBER 2008



'Waiting On The Tide' by Woody Huband



Instructor Extraodinaire Bob Clouser Here Dec. 7

Join us Sunday, Dec. 7 at M & M Dairy for Bob Clouser Day. Bob Clouser is a great friend to the club who is known for his broad sense of humor and devotion to the sport of fly fishing.

Bob Clouser for introduced the fly-fishing world to one of the most famous and effective fly patterns in the world --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 underwater fly pattern developed in the last four decades.

Clouser is also the innovator of many other fishing patterns, including the Clouser's Crayfish, Swimming Nymph, Crippled Minnow, Mad Tom, Darter Hellgrammite, E-Z Popper, and the Floating Minnow.

He writes for most of the flytying and flyfishing magazines and is featured in flytying and flyfishing videos, some of which have been shown on television nationwide.

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, and the Dr. James Henshall Award presented by the Federation of Fly Fishers.

This is a free program for dues-paid FCFF members and families. Lunch and will be drinks provided.

November Meeting - Monday, Nov 3. FCFF travelers regale us with stories and photos of their best fishing excursions. Fly tying at 6 p.m. Meeting at 7.

November Outing - St. Augustine (Butler Park and SR 206) Redfish on oyster beds, Flounder in holes of creeks, top water for trout

December 6 - Renzetti's Legends of Fly Fishing in Titusville: www.renzetti.com

December 7 - Bob Clouser Comes to the FCFF. Come join us for Bob Clouser Day, an annual event in FCFF. Bob is one of the best known names in fly fishing -- a great casting instructor, lifelong guide, and tyer supreme. M & M Dairy, 9 a.m. Lunch provided. Contact Rob Benardo at programs@fcff.org

December Outing - Dec 19 & 20. Homosassa. Contact Bob White, email: rgwhite@lycos.com for further information

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Above, A Blue Crab Camo's on A Flooded Flat Above. photo: Dick Michaelson

A Man Who Knows His Estuaries

JU's Dr. Jim Beets Gives Answers Fly Anglers Can Use

by David Lambert

JU's estuaries answer-man Dr. Jim Beets produced volumes of information about local fisheries a few years ago when he spoke to FCFF about Jacksonville's marshlands, estuaries, and backcountry habitat. Beets specializes in marine estuaries is a professor of biology at JU. His insights into fish behavior and fisheries prompted a host of questions from the audience. Beets fielded questions ranging from redfish eyesight to trout and shrimp migration

We felt like many new FCFFers will benefit greatly from a re-hash of the finer points of Jim's talk. Fact is, we could all probably learn from this. The following are answers from many of the questions asked at the November meeting:

Dr. Beets said that the St. Johns River has the greatest diversity of common fish in the state, and the greatest numbers of species of sharks.

Most people believe that reds grow about 12 inches per year, but those figures normally apply to sexually immature fish. A 37-inch redfish may be 10 or 11 years old. A 24 inch red may be 3+ years old. As we take more of the larger spawning fish out of the estuaries, the age of spawning females becomes younger. Now, 'these little girls' of 12 inches are spawning, but they don't produce anywhere near the numbers of eggs that a larger spawning-aged females produce.

Redfish generally spawn in channels and mouths of rivers; they don't go offshore and they will aggregate to spawn. The larvae are almost always found inshore until they hatch. Larvae stay in deep pools until they reach one inch, then they move to the grass, where they stay until they reach six inches. Then they move into the creeks and estuaries.

A 36-inch female may release three million eggs during a spawn, most of which are consumed before they hatch. If you take or kill a big breeder, she will be removed from the gene

pool. 'Few big fish equals many fewer eggs. Fewer eggs mean fewer fish.'

Redfish eat crabs, primarily; fiddlers and mud crabs when their young, then blue crabs. But, they have feeding preferences, which depends on the active food in a specific area. They develop a 'search image' which determines their feeding preference. When the food supply diminishes in an area, redfish will move elsewhere, or they will begin feeding on other food types and develop substitute search images. Regardless of what search image a redfish has developed, they are opportunists; if you throw a juicy baitfish (or fly pattern) at him, the fish is not likely to pass it up. That said, redfish don't go after baitfish as readily as they go after invertebrates. Find consistent movement of blue crabs in your area and you will find redfish. . .all year long.

Fish are not bright; they feed based on reaction. They will feed well up to their spawn time and they will feed well after they spawn, but they feed much less during spawn. When there is a big influx of freshwater or when the tides are very high, fish disperse into larger area. The fish may be dispersed for weeks but they will return to their original areas.

Most fish will change their forage habits during drought years. Drought changes the bait of an area, which in turn changes the fish feeding habits. Dredging an area kills a forage base, regardless of what the government agencies tell you. "You can kiss the area off and it may take decades before the areas return to their original habitat."

Environmental factors have a huge affect on fish feeding behavior. When temperature and barometric pressure change, fish will seek deeper areas. This activity may last a few hours or

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‘A fish can sense you if you’re behind it.’

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as much as a day. By the next day they have grown acclimated to the change and usually will resume normal feeding behavior.

Redfish do not migrate long distances; they are very localized. Larger crabs and shrimp move in late winter and early spring; they move en masse and the fish move with them. Larger reds move in small groups to new feeding areas in the fall when the food sources are depleted in an area or when food moves.

Small shrimp and crab come inshore in early summer and move offshore in early fall through late fall. Shrimp will follow the salinity front and they will be at the edge of the front, called the salinity wedge. Find that front and you will find the fish. Redfish can tolerate waters with 0 percent salinity, all the way up to 4,500 parts per million.

New data show that snook and tarpon are being caught as far north as Cape Hatteras. Due possibly to the trend to global



Fishless Flat: Some Days, Fish Just Don't Eat; Some Days They Do

photo: Dick Michaelson

warming, snook are caught more frequently in this area. They are also larger.

How do redfish perceive a fly? Reds can sense movement 100 meters away. Their lateral line is like having ears all over their body; they perceive vibrations from movement. Any time you go into an area, you disturb it and they hear (feel) you. A fish can sense you if you're behind it. It may or may not perceive you as a threat, but you can count on him knowing that you're there.

A redfish's zone of perception is large, but it gets smaller in shallower water or in water where there is a recent 'blanket' of fresh water.

Most fish do perceive different colors. They have an incredible range of vision, but they may not 'see' colors the way we see them. They may perceive chartreuse as the 27th variation of a shade of gray, for instance. But they do perceive the color change.



Daniel Isaac Caught This 6-lb. Red Fishing from Kayak with Dad Bart

The Smile: Is It The Fish? or Is It Fishing with Dad?

by Bart Isaac

Thanks to Demo Day at Black Creek, I was able to purchase a solo/tandem kayak to take my son, Daniel, out fishing with me. It had been a while since he is too big for my other kayak but still too small for his own kayak.

We paddled out at sunrise this morning, with a goal of just having a fun morning of exploring. We primarily fished with the one spinning rod.

Daniel was able to hook up with a trout first thing this morning—I had him trolling a paddle tail on a jig. He was all smiles. We found a red crashing in the corner on one flat however, I couldn't get close enough for him to cast. I made a long cast with the spinner at the backing fish and he hammered the paddle tail. However, he came off....I'm so used to not lifting the rod.....hahahaaa

We went further into another area that I thought I saw some activity. I had Daniel make a cast forward into the area that I thought was holding fish....sure enough....hook up. I can't tell you how much that boy was enjoying himself! I could see the smile from the back of his head....haha. Its difficult to tell how large the fish is from the picture, but it weighed 6 pounds on my boga.

Check out that smile!

Last of The Season Tailing Redfish

by Rich Santos

Well I wasn't going to go fishing, thinking that all odds were against me based on the past couple weeks grass reports and lack of fish on the flats, especially with the morning temps in the low 50s. But I kept looking for an excuse to go and said 'like why not explore some new spots' and also remembered that my last year's fish was caught on Nov.2 and the season can't be over yet! Also some encouragement from a fishing friend Scott Brown helped and being an early riser seemed to work to my advantage here. Off I went!

It was a perfect flood this morning with about an 8 a.m. high tide and a light NW wind at about 5+ mph . Air temp. about 55 degrees with super clear skies. I pushed around on the flats for about 1-1/2 hour to only spook about 4 Reds that were laid up between the grass flats on the shallow mud patches. They just moved like snails once they felt my presence. I figured it was going to be a bust! So I was working my way back to finish up my trip and spotted my 1st tailer and boy he was tailing hard and moving around like it was mid August feeding on a gazillion Fiddlers! Seemed like he hadn't eaten a week based on the way he darted at my fly and hit it and ran far! Ended up being a beautiful morning with one tail sighted and one caught.



St. A Fly Guide Jim Holland, Passes On

by Rich Santos

I'm sad to report that local kayak fly fishing guide and good fishing partner Jim Holland of <http://www.saltrunoutfitters.com/> passed away on August 18, 2008 due complications with Crohn's disease. He was 60 years old.

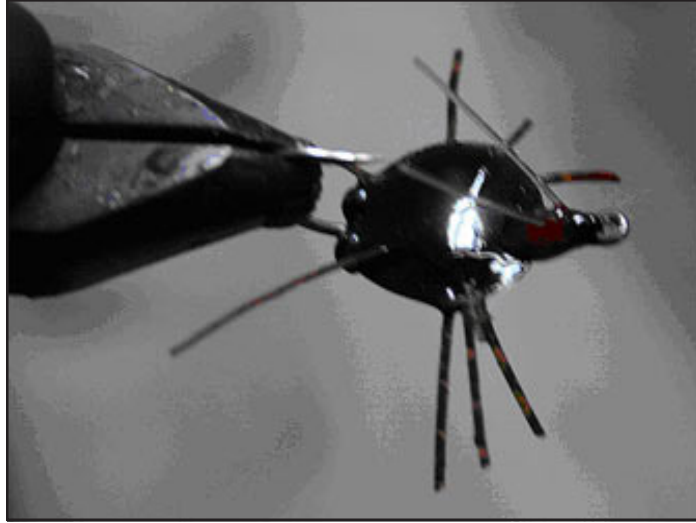
Many of you did Jim, but I can tell you that he lead in many ways when it came to teaching and wanting to help others learn fly fishing, no matter what. He was a great mentor to me--was a noble man who was kind enough to share a lot of his secrets that I'll never forget. He was true "classy" fly fisherman in every way! The celebration of life is on November 9th with his ashes being released back to nature. Your thoughts and prayers would be appreciated by his family and friends for a fellow fly fisherman.

He will be missed by many!



Fly Guide Jim Holland of St. Augustine with Black Drum

Mad Dog Fat Boy Fiddler



by Mike McQuiston

[Ed. Note: Mike McQuiston's a stand-up guy and a veteran 3 times over: He's a (1) retired Navy pilot; (2) a former USCG licensed charter guide; and (3) a veteran of the Weber grill. (His pulled pork makes the best BBQ this side of Memphis.) So when McQuiston showed up to a FCFF meeting a few months ago and passed new flies he said were working on the tailers, it was no surprise that his new pattern was a keeper. In it's short life, the Mad Dog Fat Boy Fiddler has fooled many redfish, but it's also proven effective on sheepshead and black drum.. Below, Mike provides tying instructions and photos.]

The Fat Boy Fiddler will catch all the fish on the flooded flats. It's a proven weapon for redfish, sheepshead, and black drum. The Mad Dog Fat Boy Fiddler is unique because it is smaller than most spoon flies, about half the size of a Dupree Spoon Fly, and more closely resembles a fiddler.

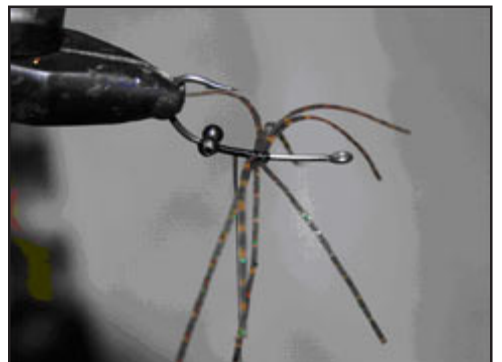
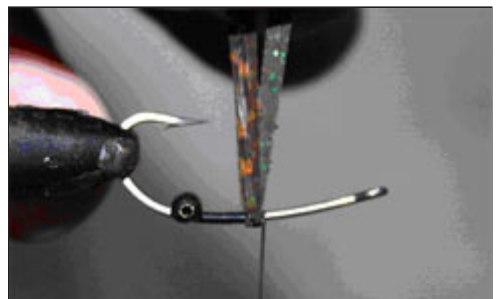
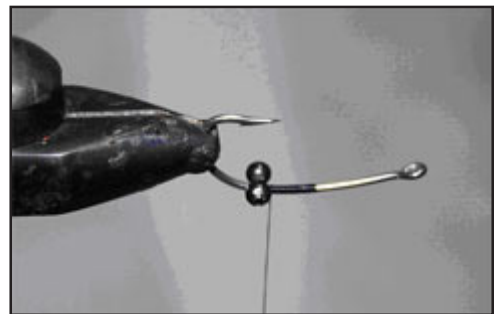
So far, black on black seems to be the most productive color combination. Root beer or brown body, orange thread on the weed guard, and/or orange bucktail tied between the eyes are also effective. Legs can be tied on between the eyes facing aft. Bucktail or feathers can be used instead of rubber legs.

This fly can be tied with a round shape and a smaller body because the monofilament frame is completed by the holes in the bead eyes. The toughest part is spinning the epoxy. It should come through the water hook-up, and that requires a convex bottom.

Tying instructions:

1. Start with a stainless steel short shank number 2 hook like the Mustad 34007. Bend the shank in slightly toward the hook point.
2. Wrap small black bead-eyes on the inside of the shank slightly aft of the hook point.
3. Tie dark-colored rubber legs or silly legs to the shank. You need 4 on each side. Continue wrapping toward the eye and tie in a piece of

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Try Fat Boy Fiddler For All Flats Fish



Bob Bueh's Black Drum on McQuiston's Fat Boy Fiddler

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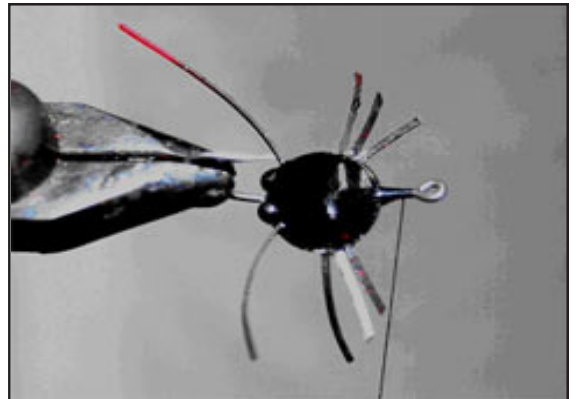
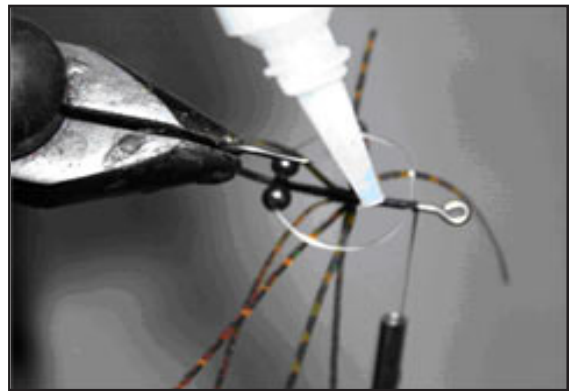
20 lb. monofilament or fluorocarbon perpendicular to the shank about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the eye.

Cut off the ends of the monofilament leaving approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inch on either side. Place the ends of the monofilament in each of the holes in the beadeyes.

4. Superglue the eyes, legs monofilament, and holes in the beadeyes.

5. With the monofilament frame secured to the hook, mix 5 minute epoxy and spray in a small amount of black paint. Glitter or finely cut crystal flash may be mixed in if desired. Add the epoxy to the fly while turning the fly on the vice. Slowly add more epoxy until the inside of the monofilament frame is covered. Continue to spin the fly while the epoxy sets up. A flat or concave surface on the hook side and a convex surface on the back side of the shank can be attained with proper rotation and spinning. You'll notice I've arranged the legs closest to the eyes above the monofilament frame, and the other legs below the monofilament frame (hook point up).

6. For the weed guard, wrap either black or red thread at the eye. Double and crimp a piece of 30 lb. fluorocarbon. Place the suspended thread on the bobber between the sides of the crimped fluorocarbon, and thread both ends of the fluorocarbon through the eye of the hook. Pull completely through the eye, and the thread will keep the crimped fluorocarbon centered on the hook. Wrap the fluorocarbon with the thread for about 8 or 10 wraps while pulling the fluorocarbon completely through the hook eye. Wrap thread behind the fluorocarbon until the 2 ends stand up a sufficient distance from the hook point. Tie off and cut the fluorocarbon ends above the hook point, forming a weed guard. Epoxy the weed guard in the desired position.





From The FishMaster's Files

by Rick Palazzini

Yep! We caught 100 percent of the fish sighted on the grass flats this day. It was a little dark out but we were shown the way by the light of a full moon. Moments following penetration onto the first flat, one solitary fish popped its' tail above the water and waved at Troutmaster (Lew Holiday). Attending all the casting clinics the club has sponsored paid off big time! The Dupree fly broke the water tension without an auditable plop. The red charged the fly from a three-foot distance while the cameras were rolling. We poled the flats for a couple more hours and did not sight a single fish. East winds push in a lot of water so go early.

Tailing Season Draws to A Close

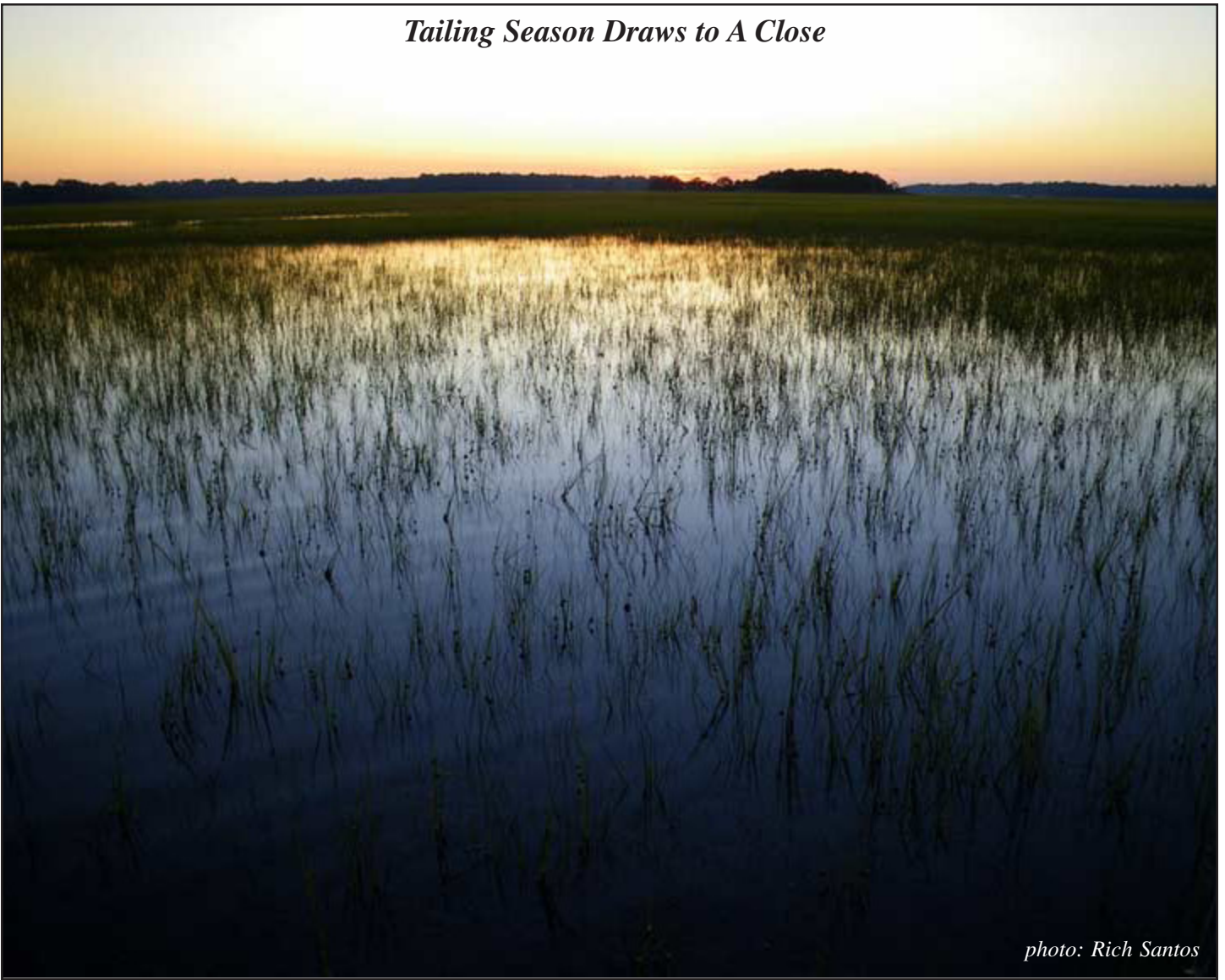


photo: Rich Santos

‘Bonefish On A Budget’ to Little Abaco, Nov. 17

by Capt. David borries

Want to go bonefishing without breaking your wallet? Get in touch with FCFer Capt. David Borries about his bonefish on a budget excursion to Little Abaco Nov. 17-20.

Capt. Borries offers a small group of bonefish anglers 3.5 days of fishing, full accommodations, meals, AND flights from St. Augustine for \$1300. You’ll stay at the Tangelo Hotel on the northern tip of the island. The trip includes one day fishing from a boat and two-and-a-half days wading the bonefish laden flats near the hotel with Capt. David Borries providing personal instruction and guiding services.

Catch an early flight from St. Augustine on Monday, Nov 17 fish 3 days and return on Nov 20. Contact Capt. David Borries: 904-708-8915; capt davidborries@comcast.net.



Casting Legend Mel Krieger Dies

Writer, casting great, showman, casting legend Mel Krieger passed away last month after a long bout with cancer. Mel defined the FFF casting program and was internationally famed for his inventive teaching style.