



We are canceling our December meeting due to the continued threat from COVID. Look to meet again in 2021 when we are safer from the virus.

Seven club members traveled to Oconee State park and fished the Chattooga River for four days. Top picture shows the upper Chattooga near its headwaters at Whiteface Mountain. We caught rainbows, browns and brook trout. Fishing was perfect for two days and then rain made things tougher. Nonetheless, we all had a great time while staying safe outdoors. Ted Hagaman with the trout on the left on an old Hardy Perfect reel.

Directions to Our Meetings (6:00 pm): From I-75---Take Bruce B. Downs exit from I-75; go west 2 miles to traffic light, turn left on to Tampa Palms Blvd., then left on Compton Drive, and right at Compton Park. From I-275---Take Bearss East to Bruce. B. Downs; then Bruce B. Downs east/north to Tampa Palms Blvd. Rt. on Tampa Palms, then left on Compton Drive and right at Compton Park.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope you all are getting by okay and staying out of harm's way. We will not have a regular meeting until 2021 because of the virus. Let's do our best and see what a new year brings.

We may have a shad outing on the St John's river in January or February. We will plan on camping out and fish for 2 or 3 days.

We are also planning on our Play Hooky outing on 11 Dec at the Suncoast Youth Center in Apollo Beach. **Gina Russo** is setting that up for us and we will fish their pond as we did on the old site.

This month's Trout magazine has an article by John Gierach. He is a wonderful writer with and tells fishing stories in an easy, conversational tone. I just got his new book for Christmas: *Dumb Luck and the Kindness of Strangers*. He ends his Trout article with this tidbit he attributed to a friend: **Damn, these are strange and uncharted waters, but we're all sailors at heart.** Let's all sail as best we can.

//Walt Durkin 

Suncoast Youth Conservation Center Outing

Join us to fish their pond and check out the Center. We will provide lunch and drinks. Check out their website for details on the site and for directions.

11 December 2020, 0900 to 100.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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|--|--------------------------|
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Suncoast Youth Conservation Center Outing – 11 Dec.

Address is 6650 Dickman Road Apollo Beach, FL 33572. 11 December from 9 AM to 1 PM. Lunch and drinks provided. We will fish their pond. Details from Gina Russo below.

COVID-19 Safety Precautions: TECO says masks are to be worn at all times on site (this includes while fishing because I asked). The exception is for the socially distanced lunch. There will be blue X's on the pavilion tables to note where to sit that is 6 ft away from the next X. All Anglers will be temperature checked, so if anyone is running a fever of 100.0 or higher they and whoever they carpooled with will be asked to leave- meaning the fever holder and everyone who arrived in the same vehicle.

There will be bathrooms outside next to the building open, and as I mentioned before, we have to park in the FYCCN parking lot and walk down to the pavilion to place our things. We can fish the fishing dock/pier and anywhere around the pond that's safe. The Fishing Pier is ADA compliant and accessible to wheelchair guests.

I asked about touring the site, If someone is available when we are there I may be able to get them to give us a tour, but no promises. TECO has a kayak trip scheduled as well that afternoon and FYCCN staff will be needed to host that trip. So we'll see.



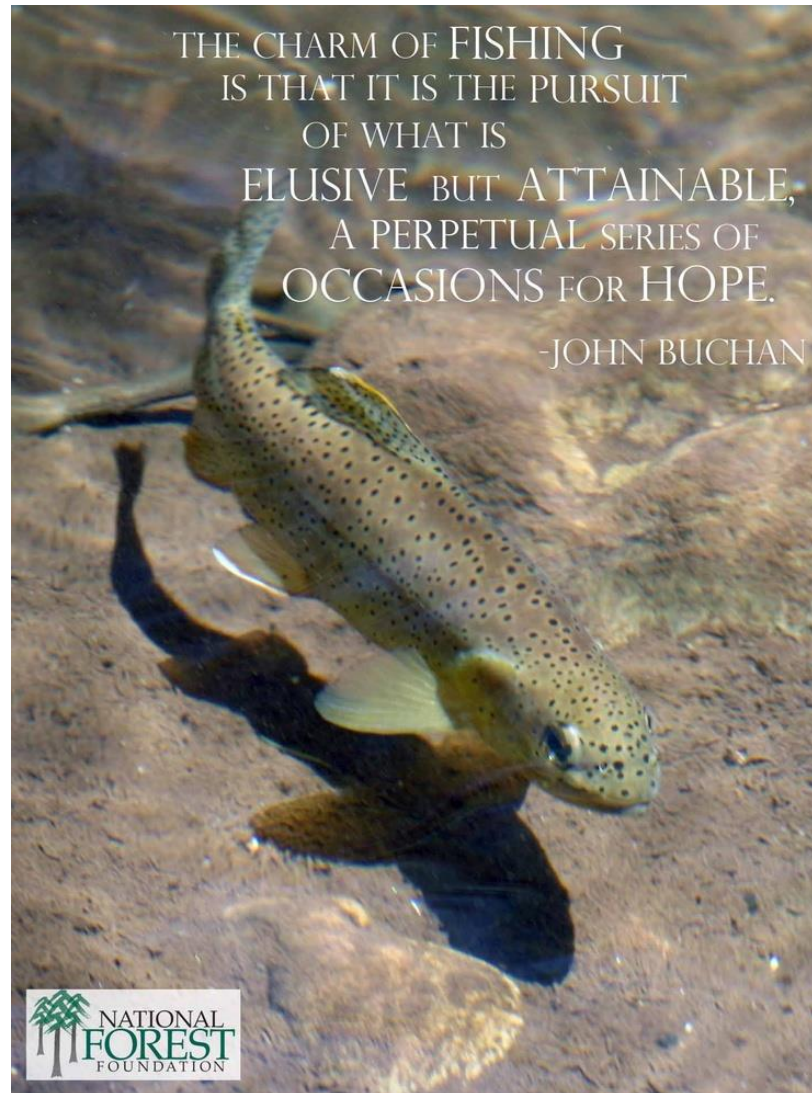
TBFFC NEWS & NOTES

Kayak guide Neil Taylor:

If you have guys that are tying a lot, we could use some more people in the fly swap. On Facebook, it's Warm Water Fly Swap and Project Healing Waters. You submit 15 flies and get 15 flies in return. It is kind of dragging right now so I'm asking around to see who else wants to get in. //Neil

Club member Jeff Abeles is planning a trip to Gray Reef Anglers and Wingshooting Lodge in Casper, Wyoming in either mid July or mid September 2021. We will be fishing the N. Platte river specifically the Gray Reef and the Miracle Mile sections. Great dry fly fishing on the river at that time of the year. I've done a lot of trout fishing over the past 30 plus years. I can count on one hand the rivers I've fished with this many quality fish ranging from 18 to 21 inches. And they weren't the big ones. Due to excess weeds in September, the Miracle Mile was fishing slow with an occasional 25 inch'er plus being caught. My wife and I chose the quantity and only fished 4 sections of the Gray Reef and still couldn't believe the fishing. If you have any interest in going, call me at 813-495-7155.

January Casting Clinic will likely be cancelled.



Winter Fishing Tips

Our winter fishing opportunities are off to a good start this year with the negative lows appearing the first week of November. I fished the Cypress flat five days when a good NE wind produced lower than normal tides. I was rewarded with good action from reds and jacks and also had shots at trout and snook. Small bait was everywhere on the flat and I caught six reds and as many jacks as I wanted. Snook were also chasing the bait and I hooked and missed several. I also saw big trout and had shots, but they are tricky to catch in shallow water.

So, the first tip is to plan on fishing the low negative tides this winter. Print tide charts for November thru February and circle the days when we have negative low tides. These low tides will expose the terrain of the flat and concentrate the fish. As the good lows approach, watch for favorable wind conditions. North and NE winds are ideal as they push water out of Tampa Bay and make the tides lower than predicted. Finally, hope for a sunny day for the best chance to sight fish. Thus, the perfect day is a predicted low, after a front, with mild NE winds and good sun. I call these “golden days” to fish and they should not be missed. Under these conditions, you have a good chance to find happy fish in cool, clear water that are often tailing.

The second tip is to find a flat where you can wade fish under these great conditions. Look for a flat that faces south (ideal) or one that looks to the west. Remember our best winds are from the north, which you want at your back on windy days. The flat at the south end of MacDill is a good example. It faces due south and fishes well all winter with the favorable winds. Find a good flat you can fish by wading or from a boat and make it your own. Plan to be there all winter on the good tides for great sight fishing.

Tip number three is that winter fishing requires stealth. You are on your flat, surrounded by fish and what now? First, lengthen your leader to 12-15 feet. These fish will spook if they see your fly line and they see well in the clear water. Second, I go down to a 10 pound tippet. This is pretty light but, holds up fine with good knots. You can fish 12 or 15 lb, but lesson your chances I have found. Of course, if casting to snook add a little 25 pound bite tippet. Next, move more slowly and stand still more in the winter. If you are seeing fish, they will often come to you with a little patience. When fish see movement above the water they sense danger and will flee, so move carefully. Also, use side arm casts to present your fly as stealthy as possible. Finally, consider using a clear sink-tip line. This versatile line casts well, gets down quicker and is less likely to spook fish. In this clear water the trick is to get your fly on the bottom in front of the fish before it knows you are there. Fish small crab and shrimp patterns for these bottom-oriented fish during mid-winter. Small minnow patterns will work well in fall and early winter while bait is still around.

Hope these tips help and I see you on the water with a tight line!

I had five good days of fishing the Cypress flat the first week of November. Strong NE winds produced lower than predicted tides and concentrated the fish on the outside bar until the tide turned and came in. Clear skies all week made for good visibility and sight fishing. Small bait was everywhere and snook and jacks were chasing them. Cypress is a great flat with a good mixture of sand and grass. On Monday morning, I was the only one there at 0830 and had the flat to myself for two hours. How lucky are we to live here.

I discovered some unusual behavior for redfish that week. Each morning when I arrived I found jacks racing around the outside bar chasing bait. These were nice fish averaging three pounds and were easy to catch on a minnow pattern. They tested my tackle and easily went into the backing. Several times as I brought them in they had redfish swimming with them. Then, I noticed as the jacks came close chasing bait, some reds were among them getting in on the action. Reds don't usually run around fast chasing bait, but they were mimicking the jacks behavior. In effect the jack were chumming up the reds for me. I carefully showed my minnow fly to the next red I saw and he grabbed it quickly. I caught four reds on minnow patterns that week under those conditions. Reds prefer to move slowly and graze as opposed to the fast moving jacks. Nonetheless, I was happy to see it and give the reds what they were keyed on. These, normally spooky reds were easy to catch among the feeding jacks.

Snook and trout were also present and well as a bunch of small sharks. I hooked a half dozen snook and did not land one. The trout also proved hard to catch as I usually spooked them before I saw them. Finally, I had two nice fish, one snook and one red swimming together. They came right at me before I had a chance to cast to them. Two buddies, cruising the flat looking for an easy meal.

The winter season is off to a good start and I hope to see you out there. //Walt

P.S. I have caught 10 reds and 6 snook so far on the low tides in November at Cypress.



Bryce with a red, Walt with a good one (31"), Bruce with a jack: all on Cypress Flat.



Big Gun 2020 Report: The club hosted another successful Big Gun with 10 teams of three participating. We appreciate the turn-out during these stressful times and hope we had a safe and fun event. Walt Hoover won the individual trophy, Denise Bruner won best woman and Dave Olsen won the longest cast with 113 feet. Best overall team was Dave Olsen, Walt Hoover and Eric Davis . Thanks to the Suncoast Club for participating with several teams. And, thanks to the board members for setting up and scoring. Special thanks to Ginny Fischer for signing up teams and keeping all the scores straight. We caught a nice day with sun and a light wind. People wore masks and kept apart fairly well. Tampa Fishing Outfitters donated a bunch of items including a fly rod for our free raffle. Thanks to Keaton and Kris from Tampa Fishing Outfitters and I encourage club members to stop by their store for all your fishing needs, both fly and spin. We welcome comments on how to improve this annual event. I'll send the final score sheet out as a separate document. //Walt

Walt Hoover



Denise Bruner



Dave Olsen



Chatoogga Pictures: Robert Fischer, Whiteface Mountain, Robert and Bruce Anderson resting. The nice trout was caught by Ted Hagaman.



Club member and guide, Keaton Anderson found sheephead on the fly at Anclote.



Club member Bryce is enjoying fishing near his cabin in N Georgia this fall. Nottely river is pictured right.



Fishing Report and Forecast

“What a great time to go fishing!”

Kayak guide Neil Taylor reports: Post summer conditions are ideal. Water temperatures are at a great level before regular cold fronts drive the temperature down more. The action has been excellent for months. Morning trips have dominated but with a cold front or two, late afternoon options will be excellent as well. On the fly, we have easily caught trout, bluefish and occasionally some big mackerel. The Neil Fly, a lot of gold, has been the fly of choice. White and silver mixed in with the gold, there is a weighted head on each one to help get it down. Smooth to slow strips have been best for trout and go faster when in the bluefish and mackerel. **Contact Neil at Livelybaits@aol.com** Phone: 727-692-6345

Capt. Pat Damico reports: The ultimate thrill for a fly fisherman is to carefully present a fly to a large, unsuspecting fish in shallow water and enjoy a violent, aggressive take. The combination of early morning skinny water, which gives the fish a chance to relax overnight from daytime disturbances, and lack of summer floating grass will continue to improve. Watch carefully for disturbances that indicate moving and feeding fish. Herons and pelicans flying over shallow flats will disturb fish and give you a target. Small baitfish scattering often gives away the position of large trout, redfish and also snook. A tail slowly waving belongs to a redfish digging for a crab or shrimp. Sheepshead do the same thing. Stealth is the key to success. Wading gets you closer than most boats. Move like a feeding heron to prevent ripples on calm water that alert fish to an intruder's presence. A fish that knows you're there might hang around but will stop feeding. Equip your 7- or 8-weight fly rod with a 12-foot tapered leader. A 12- to 15-pound tippet might be needed. A loop knot tied to a size 4 crab pattern in a color that matches the bottom with bead-chain eyes and weed guard completes the setup. Cast carefully and accurately. Remember, crustaceans move slowly. If you have follows and refusals, slow everything down. Always strip set the hook when the fish is felt. Trying to set the hook by raising the tip of the rod usually guarantees a miss. **Fly fisherman Pat Damico** charts Fly Guy in lower Tampa Bay and can be reached at captpatdamico.com and (727) 504-8649.

Capt. Rick Grasset reports: Conditions were near perfect for a change when TBFFC member Greg Stepanski, from Tampa, fished the coastal gulf with me. He had good action catching and releasing several false albacore on flies, CAL jigs with shad tails and plugs. We covered a lot of water before we found them late in the trip but it was worth the effort!

Fish the coastal gulf for false albacore (little tunny), Spanish mackerel and tripletail when conditions are good. Fishing deep grass flats of Sarasota Bay is also a good choice for action with a variety of species including trout, blues and Spanish mackerel. Shallow water action for reds and snook should be good as the water cools. Our natural resources are under constant pressure from red tides fueled by industrial, agricultural and residential runoff, freezes, increasing fishing pressure and habitat loss and degradation, please limit your kill, don't kill your limit! Snook Fin-Addict Guide Service, Inc. (941) 923-7799 (office)



Our new **traveling club flags** are on the move! Four club members in Cayo Coco, Cuba in May. Lower right **Ted and Frank** in Cordova AK in September. **Lou and Walt** at Casuarina Point, Abaco, Bahamas in April 2018.



Patty and Bruce Anderson
In Belize City, Belize
behaving themselves



Mexico 2019 hog
snapper dinner



Ted and Walt beach snook
fishing Little Gasparilla
Island May 2019



Walt and Capt. Frank
in the jungles of Columbia
March 2019



Two Boys Inn, Andros, Sep 19



2020/21 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Jan 18 Red Fly Tournament
- Feb Shad Outing, Mullet Lake campground
- Mar Casting Clinic
- Mar 29 Annual Banquet - Cancelled
- Apr 23 CCA Banquet - Cancelled
- June 27 Lake Calm Freshwater Outing
- Oct 10-17 Two Boys inn, Andros Island (postponed)
- Oct (virtual) Marine Quest, St Pete
- Oct 17-24 Mexico: Costa de Cocas trip (postponed)
- Oct Carl Hanson Outing
- Nov 8-12 Chattooga Trip for trout still a go
- Nov 6-7 FFI Expo
- Nov 15 Big Gun, Picnic Island
- Cancelled Florida Sportsman Show
- Dec 11 Play Hooky at the Suncoast Youth Center
- Dec Don Coleman Outing, Ft Desoto
- Jan 16 Fly Casting Clinic

Member Benefits

TBFFC is famous for its value and focus on the sharing of information, experience, and craftsmanship with its members. As a TBFFC member you will enjoy many benefits free or at nominal cost.

- Monthly Meetings with informative speakers
- Fishing Trips Sponsored by Members and the Club
- Group Clinics and Workshops
- Fly Tying Lessons
- One-On-One Fly Casting Lessons
- Shirts and Hats with club logo
- 80-page Beginner's Basic Skills Instruction Manual
- Annual Banquet

Fly Fishing Guides

- Capt. Nick Angelo (813) 230-8473
- Capt. Pat Damico (727) 504-8649
- Capt. Bryon Chamberlin (813) 361-8801
- Capt. Rick Grassett (941) 923-7799
- Capt. John Hand (239) 842-7778
- Capt. Greg Peterson (423) 432-1973

Fly Casting Coaches

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Steve Parker.....813-287-5583
Walt Durkin.....813-853-5870

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Robert Fischer.....813-495-5685
Dan Lagace.....813-929-6605
Leigh West813-971-8697

St. Petersburg

Capt. Pat Damico.....727-504-8649

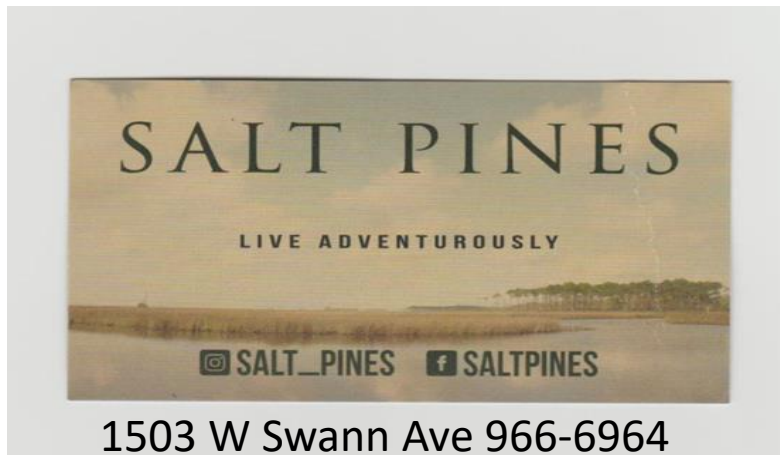
Polk County

Capt. Frank Rhodes.....863-967-4258

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Member Application

Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club

Name: _____

Date: _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State: ___ Zip: _____

Hm. Phone: _____ Wk. Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Type of Membership: _____

Please Check: One Year _____ Five Year _____

Please list names you wish to include in family membership

Annual Dues: \$25.00 Individual Membership

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(includes one membership and Ad Space)

\$120.00 Corporate Double Membership

(includes two memberships or family membership and

Ad Space in Newsletter)

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\$140.00 Family Membership

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