



We will meet 6:30 pm on 3 January at the Northdale Recreation Center off N. Dale Mabry Hwy.

Our meeting Tuesday, 3 January, will include a presentation about juvenile tarpon in the Tampa Bay Area. Tim Elms from the **Sun Coast Fly Fishers** will take us on journey of how, when, and what to do in fun and unusual ways. Tim was born and raised in Denver, Colorado and traded his nymphs for bait patterns in 2018 when he and his wife decided to move to the St Pete area. Shortly after he joined SFF he became their webmaster and writes for their newsletter, even interviewing and becoming friends with Andy Mill. From 3lb bream to winning a bass tournament with a fly, Tim settled in nicely to warm water fly fishing from shore. It wasn't long before Tim became obsessed with the silver prince. In 2020 he landed his first and from then on has landed over 200. He specializes in "from shore" lakes, ponds, and creeks and has yet to land one on a spin rod. Buckle up for a rousing tarpon talk by the tarpon prince of Pinellas. !

**Directions to Our Meetings (6:30 pm) Northdale Rec Center: Take Dale Mabry north past Ehrlich Road and then left on Northdale Blvd. Then left on Spring Pine Drive and straight to the Rec Center on the right.**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thanks to everyone who participated in our holiday party at Compton Park. We all had a good time eating fish and grits as well as all the other items folks brought. Special thanks to Greg and Julian for hosting us in that super location. And, thanks to our decorating committee who provided us with a lively western theme and to Robert and Ginny for cooking.

Our club is running at an annual deficit, thus your board of directors voted to raise the annual dues to \$40. It will also allow us to become an affiliate member of Fly Fishers International, which we need for club insurance.

Please note our joint banquet with the Suncoast club is set for 25 March. This fun and informal event is an important fund raiser for the club and I hope you can attend. See details herein.

Our casting clinic is 14 January. This is a great opportunity for all club members and you will also help the Fly Fishers International. Details on page 3.

//Walt Durkin 



Strange. Your fly rod looks just like the custom model I requested for Christmas and didn't receive."

## **OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

President: Walt Durkin	<b>813-513-2122</b>
<a href="mailto:Walt.durkin@aol.com">Walt.durkin@aol.com</a>	cell <b>813-853-5870</b>
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Robert Fischer	813-495-5685
Bruce Anderson	813-786-3902
Keaton Anderson	404-313-7820

## TBFFC NEWS & NOTES

Our “**Hooky for the Holidays**” on **Friday, 9 December** at the Suncoast Youth Conservation Center was a big success. We enjoyed good weather, food and a tour of their facilities. Thanks to Gina Russo (FWC) for hosting us and Candice Wade and Alex Bishop from Suncoast Youth Center guiding the kakaks. Lauren Goldsworthy Gomez was the TECO Volunteer Coordinator and gave us the site tour.

The center has an education building where they teach kids about taking care of our environment. They also offer many outdoor oriented camps in the summer. The aquarium building rehabilitates sea turtles from around the country and also does research on sea urchins and sea coral, of which we have lost 96% already. We also got a special tour of the inside of the new hatchery building, which will be in operation next year. Gina said they will focus on growing and releasing sea trout. See photos on pages 7 and 8.

For those who missed it, you can walk our route from the manatee viewing center to the youth center. We hope to do another outing here in the spring.

We saw snook and a few reds, but only caught one snook. Nonetheless, a very enjoyable kayak outing.  
//Walt

### **Cuba Fly Fishing Trip**

Some club members are planning a trip to Cuba starting 28 October next year. This a one week trip for bonefish, permit and tarpon. It is a good trip at a fairly low price with good fishing, accommodations and guides. Please email me (Walt Durkin) for the details if you are interested.

### **Don Coleman Outing and Chili Cook-off**

Suncoast decided to cancel this event in December due to red tide in the area. They are looking at 21 January for another try.

**Red Fly Tournament 14 January 2023.** Please see their Facebook page for details on this one-day fly fishing event.

### **The Waterman Fly Fishing Tournament 4,5 Feb.**

See TBWK.org for details. Tampa Bay Waterkeeper is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. They are a member of the Waterkeeper Alliance, a global network of over 350 grassroots leaders in six continents protecting everyone’s right to clean water.



# FLY CASTING AND FLY FISHING CLINIC

**WHERE:** Egan Park, 9101 Blind Pass Rd, St. Pete Beach, FL 33706

**WHEN:** Saturday, January 14, 2023, from 8 am to 3 pm.

**WHAT:** We will be using a different format! We'll keep working on fundamental skills but will make the drills much more like real fishing conditions. All levels of expertise, or lack thereof, will be accommodated and welcomed. Bring whatever equipment you have; leaders and practice flies will be provided. We also have some club rods.

**WHO:** Master Certified Fly Casting Instructors Dale Mazzarella, Pat Damico, Certified Instructors Jonas Magnusson, Chris O'Byrne, and others will assist you in developing the skills needed to catch more fish.

**COST:** Free to FFI members, others can join FFI for a year \$25 for Seniors and Veterans, and \$35 for Regular

Breakfast and lunch are provided by sponsor Suncoast Fly Fishers. Come join us for a fun day of friendship and instruction! Members from all clubs are welcome as well as the general public.

Pat Damico, 727-504-8649, Tom Gadacz, 706-726-7899, or Jonas Magnusson 361-903-2846 should be contacted to reserve your place if you haven't signed the sign-up sheet.



# Club Banquet 25 March

**Annual Banquet: Saturday , March 25.** Hog Roast Party at St. Jerome Catholic Church, 10895 Hamlin Blvd., Largo. Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club will join the Suncoast Club this year, adding to the product donations and bidding for gear and trips. Legendary angler Chico Fernandez is our guest speaker.

Tickets are \$25 and you can buy them at the next two meetings. Or, you can also buy them at the door, but please let me know if you plan to attend. This is a big fund raiser for both clubs and helps keep our annual dues on the low side. We will offer many great fly fishing items at a low cost for you to bid on. Items include: waders, waist packs, tackle bags, sunglasses, Lamson fly reels, fly lines, nippers, fly boxes, 7 and 8 weight fly rods, flies and more! We will also offer gift baskets and local guide trips. This will be your chance to get a great guided trip for a bargain price. Don't miss this fun event.



# Holiday Party Photos





# Hooky for the Holiday's Kayak Outing 9 Dec







## Our tour of the Suncoast Conservation Center



# Fly Casting Tip 23-01

## Avoid Slack Line at All Costs

A common expression in fly fishing is “tight lines.” This expression implies keeping your line tight while fishing, fighting a fish or casting is a good thing. This is especially true for an effective cast. Looking at the physics of the cast for a minute, we are casting the weight of the fly line. As we begin a cast (with some line out) the weight of the line causes the rod to bend, storing energy, and then releasing it on the back and forward casts. The late Mel Kreiger put it this way when he visited the club years ago: “to make a good cast simply bend the rod and stop the rod”. Another truism is a cast does not begin until the end of the line and leader begin moving. Until then you are just picking up slack before you start the cast.

So, how do you avoid slack in your cast? First, after you have made a cast and start retrieving or moving your fly, keep the tip of your rod under the surface of the water. This will establish and maintain a straight line from your hand holding the line straight thru to your fly. In other word, no slack! Then, when you are ready to begin a new cast you will load tension on the rod from the start. This will allow a slow, smooth pickup followed by a snap of the wrist **as the fly leaves the water**. You rod is now fully loaded and when you stop at about the one o'clock position the line will unroll high and fast above your head. Wait a second and then make a smooth forward cast stopping the rod at a 10 o'clock position. Keeping slack out of your casting stroke is an important element good casters are aware of and practice.

Additionally, keeping you rod tip down in the water will also help you feel a fish take your fly. It also aides in a “strip strike” as you are less likely to raise the rod from that position. Finally, when you move the fly a couple of inches with a tight line, the fly actually moves, which is a good thing. I hope this simple tip on keeping that rod tip down will help your fishing and casting. Make “tight lines” your New Year’s resolution. //Walt

# Interesting People You Meet On the Water

While wade fishing the south end of the Cypress flat in early December I noticed a guy working a net thru the grass. After he made a couple of passes, he went to the shore and emptied his net on the beach. As I was leaving, I walked over and asked what he had caught. Turns out this is what he does for a living and he was primarily after small sea horses. He indeed had some sea horses, which he exports to Canada for salt water aquariums. He also found several types of minnows, shrimp and other critters. I was amazed so many little creatures lived in that grass, mostly sight unseen. He said he also sifts the sand bottom and gets all kinds of animals from underneath the sand. I often see red fish cruising and looking hard at the bottom. They tail fairly often indicating finding prey, but nothing I have ever seen except the occasional crab. Pictured right is one of a dozen pike fish he had in his net. I wish I had gotten his name and taken more pictures. I hope to see him again soon and talk to him in more depth. He was very knowledgeable about life on the grass flats in Tampa Bay. This is good info as we try to fool gamefish in the flats. //Walt



# What is your favorite fly?

## Jim Stroger

My uncle taught me to fly fish when I was about ten years old. I only saw him use two flies in all the years we fished together, and his absolute favorite was the wet fly coachman, which looks similar to a prince nymph. He explained the advantages of that fly, and it made total sense to me. To a fish, it looks buggy with the peacock herl body, the soft hackle beard for legs and a soft hackle tail. The real key though is the white wings that the fly fisher can track as it is drifted and worked downstream into likely spots. It was the first fly I learned how to tie, and it was pretty much the only fly I used for probably the next ten years. I have caught a lot of fish on the coachman over the years. While I still know that I could continue to do very well with just the coachman, I have

broadened my fly selection since then. Like many of you, I have a bunch of fly boxes. I organize them for different fishing purposes or destinations. I have a Lees Ferry box, an Alaska box, a San Juan box, a dry fly box, and an all purpose box with probably close to 300 flies in it. But when I fish these days, I mostly only carry two small fly boxes that fit into my shirt pocket, and in reality, I rarely change the two flies that are on my fly rod. I should clarify that a bit, as I actually have two fly rods set up in my car. One is rigged with two dry flies and one is set up with two wet flies. I almost always fish the wet fly rig. I use it at Green Valley Lake, the East Verde, and Tonto Creek. The other rod I use more often on the Upper East Verde, Upper Christopher, Upper Canyon, and Horton.

One of the interesting aspects of fly fishing that I really appreciate is that fly fishers are very willing to share what flies are working for them. I have had several conversations on a stream that have ended up with either receiving or giving a fly that was working that day. All of this got me thinking about which flies I use most often. I am primarily a wet fly fisher, so my fly selection is heavy in that category, and the dries that I typically use are buoyant enough to hold up an unweighted wet fly trailer or small bead-head.

My top flies include:

- prince nymph or wet fly coachman
- zebra midge
- pheasant tail
- hare's ear
- woolly bugger
- pine squirrel leech
- elk hair caddis
- humpy
- stimulator
- Griffith's gnat.

If you looked at my two little fly boxes, they would have a variety of sizes and colors of these flies both weighted and unweighted. And if you looked at my fly rod, you would usually see two flies in particular that are there most of the time. What would make your top ten flies? What about your **top five? What fly would be all-time go-to fly?**

**This article is courtesy of Bob McKeon- Desert Fly Casters....12/8/2022**

I did not receive any photos from club members this month. I am pictured right with a 28 inch red caught on our annual trip to Wacasassa Bay. Ted has hosted this trip for 30 years with a group of CCA anglers.

My friend Rob is pictured below on the Cypress flat fighting an impressive 28 inch red. We should have taken the fish grabber out before we took the picture. Good job Rob on a nice fish! He caught it on a small tan cross between a crab and shrimp. We found fish after Christmas on the afternoon low tides. We had great weather for a few days with NE winds.



## Trolling Motor For Sale

Club member Robert Fischer is selling this trolling motor. Motor Guide W75 Remote Control Trolling Motor; 24 volt, 48" shaft; very good condition. \$350. Call Robert at 813-495-5685.



## **Fishing Report and Forecast**

### **“What a great time to go fishing!”**

Some first-time guided trips are more successful than others because of unclear expectations by both the client and guide. Discussions of the day's activities and results by each group can be very revealing. When guides get together they want to know about the trip, and customers do likewise. I can't think of any guides that frequently haven't been clients themselves on many occasions. When guides have a free fishing day they often will get together with another guide to exchange information. It is all part of a continuous learning experience. This may be more common in fly fishing because of increased interest by younger clients, people changing from offshore to inshore, freshwater to saltwater, and bait and spinning to the long rod. Women are the fastest-growing segment in all types of fly fishing. At a trout fly club event in Pennsylvania recently I sat with five freshwater trout fishers who all said their dream was to catch a large tarpon on a fly rod. This means they would be using much heavier equipment from a moving boat, frequently casting in very windy conditions to a moving gigantic fish that will surely make their knees knock. Will both the guide and the client be prepared for serious disappointment?

Fly fisherman and casting instructor Pat Damico charts Fly Guy in lower Tampa Bay and can be reached at [captpatdamico.com](http://captpatdamico.com) and 727-504-8649.

**Capt Rick Grasset reports:** Fin-Addict Guide Service, Inc.; E-mail [snookfin@aol.com](mailto:snookfin@aol.com); (941) 923-7799. Even though there may not be much happening in the coastal gulf this month in the way of sight fishing it may be worth a look when it is warm. Migratory species such as king and Spanish mackerel, cobia and tripletail probably have moved further south, however they could reappear during warm ups. Also look for false albacore (little tunny) when it's warm since they may move from offshore to inshore depending on where baitfish are located.

January can be one of the toughest months of the year to fish. However if you are able to choose when to fish based on tides and weather, it can be good. Action is usually good as weather fronts approach. Following fronts, fishing may be tough for a couple of days so afternoons may fish better then. I'll let the stage of the tide determine where to look for fish. When the tide is low, look for reds tailing on shallow grass or reds, trout and more in potholes or around docks. Look for reds or big trout cruising on shallow grass flats on sunny afternoons when the tide is high. Our natural resources are under constant pressure from red tides fueled by agricultural, industrial and residential runoff, toxic spills and discharges, freezes, increasing fishing pressure and habitat loss and degradation, please limit your kill, don't kill your limit!





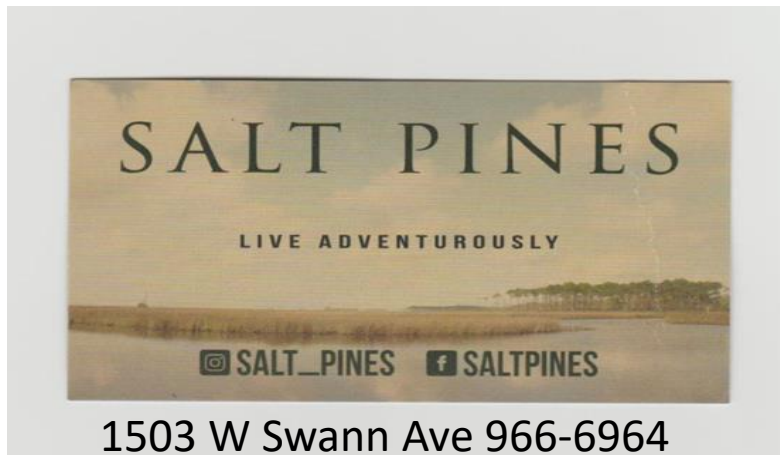
## 2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Jan 14 Casting Clinic
- Jan 14 Red Fly Tournament
- 25 Mar Annual Banquet
- June Lake Calm Freshwater Outing
- Oct (virtual) Marine Quest, St Pete
- Oct Carl Hanson Outing
- Nov Chattooga Trip for trout
- Nov Big Gun, Picnic Island
- Dec Play Hooky at the Suncoast Youth Center
- Dec Don Coleman Outing, Ft Desoto

## Corporate Sponsors

These companies sponsored the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club. Some are members of the club. We urge you to patronize them.

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## 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

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- Capt. Nick Angelo (813) 230-8473
- Capt. Pat Damico (727) 504-8649
- Capt. Bryon Chamberlin (813) 361-8801
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### North Tampa

Jonas Magnusson.....361 903 2846

Robert Fischer.....813-495-5685

Leigh West .....813-971-8697

Ted Hagaman.....813-920-7863

### St. Petersburg

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

# Member Application

Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

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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

\$35.00 Family 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)

Five-year dues: \$100.00 Individual Membership

\$140.00 Family Membership

Please make check payable to: Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club C/O Walt Durkin at 3401 W Vasconia St, Tampa, FL 33629