



We will meet 6:30 pm on 7 March at the Northdale Recreation Center off N. Dale Mabry Hwy.

**Local tarpon fly fishing aficionado Rick Redd** will talk about his years of hunting and catching tarpon off our coast. He will bring all his gear, including rods, reels lines and flies. Rick is a real expert and will have many tips and stories to offer. He was also a tackle rep and can answer your questions about gear or rod and reel repair.

Rick is a long time supporter of environmental organizations such as CCA, the IGFA and Captains for Clean Water. He will offer comments on the health of our waters and the importance of doing our part in ongoing conservation efforts. Please join us for an informative and lively presentation. //Walt



**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 enjoyed our last meeting. Thanks to Robert, Denise and Dale for their talk on fly fishing for bonefish in the Bahamas. We will likely schedule another trip next January.

Please pay your annual dues if you have not done so. You can mail me a check made out to the club at: 3401 W Vasconia St, Tampa 33629. We raised dues to \$40 to allow us to remain solvent and buy club insurance. We are also now an affiliate member of Fly Fishers International. FFI is our big organization promoting fly fishing world wide. I urge you to check out their website and join.

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 both clubs and I hope you can attend. Buy tickets at the next meeting. All ticket holders are in for the drawing of a free guide trip.

Jonas will be available at 5:30 for casting lessons continuing thru the spring and summer. Bring your own rod or Jonas will have one. Don't miss this opportunity for first class help.

//Walt Durkin 

## **Fly Fishing Quotes**

"Fish are, of course, indispensable to the angler. They give him an excuse for fishing and justify the fly rod without which he would be a mere vagrant."  
~Sparse Grey Hackle

"Bragging may not bring happiness, but no man having caught a large fish goes home through an alley." ~Ann Landers

"Smoked carp tastes just as good as smoked salmon when you ain't got no smoked salmon". ~Patrick F. McManus

## **OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

President: Walt Durkin	<b>813-513-2122</b>
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VP: Ted Hagaman	813-920-7863
Rick Valeri	813-765-3217
Patty Anderson	813-787-2556
Denise Bruner	813-748-5065
Bryon Chamberlin	813-361-8801
Pat Damico	727-504-8649
Robert Fischer	813-495-5685
Bruce Anderson	813-786-3902
Keaton Anderson	404-313-7820

Photos from our February meeting. Thanks for attending!



## TBFFC NEWS & NOTES

**This from the Suncoast Club:** As you probably know the **International Fly Fishing Film Festival** is a very popular event for fly fishers every year as it makes the rounds across the U.S. Once again, with thanks Andy Thornal Fly Shop in Winter Haven, the film is coming to town, so to speak. It will be shown at 7 pm on March 10 at the historic [Ritz Theatre](#) in downtown Winter Haven.

And it's a two-fer: Allen Wyatt, who manages the Andy Thornal Fly Shop, is inviting all fly fishers to a tailgating BBQ and free beer meet-up at the store before the film starts. Arrive at the fly shop at 5 pm. The shop address is 336 Magnolia Avenue, Winter Haven. Here's the link: <https://www.andythornal.com>.

The International Fly Fishing Film Festival is the world's leading fly-fishing film event. It consists of films produced by professional filmmakers from all around the world and showcases the passion, lifestyles, and cultures of fly fishing. It is THE gathering place for the fly-fishing community and a celebration of friendships and fly fishing stories.

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

Suncoast decided to cancel this event in December due to red tide in the area. Rick Warfel from the Suncoast writes: "We have rescheduled the Don Coleman Invitational for March 18, 2023, at Ft. DeSoto, pavilion #4. I hope all your members can come. Spring fishing should be in full swing, and our chili luncheon is always a big hit."

### **Fly Fishing Film Tour at Two Locations**

Tampa, FL - Tampa Theatre, May 7, 2023  
Show Host is Tampa Bay Waterkeeper

Sarasota, FL - Fogartyville Community Media and Arts Center, May 5, 2023 - 7:30 PM

Buy Tickets and More Info

<https://flyfilmtour.myeventscenter.com/event/Sarasota-FL-Mangrove-Coast-Fly-Fishers-73956?preview=1>

### **Picnic Island Outing 11 March**

Let's plan an informal outing at Picnic Island on the Saturday after the meeting. Meet at 0800 at the far end near shelter 603. Plan to target snook and reds with attractor patterns such as Puglici minnows, seaducers, clousers, green and gold bendbacks or deceivers. Try the west shore if wind permits or at the very end and the east side. This is good kayak water, but you can wade. Snook often hang near the rocks at the far end. I will be in Colorado chasing winter trout, so good luck.



# Club Banquet/Hog Roast 25 March

**Annual Banquet: Saturday , March 25, 4 PM.** 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 meeting or at <https://suncoastflyfishers.com/> Or, you can also buy them at the door, but please let me know if you plan to attend (Walt Durkin 813-853-5870). 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.



## The 2023 Waterman Tournament Results

The two-day, fly-only redfish tournament with a Snook Calcutta (an award for the longest snook of the tournament) was a sellout with 126 anglers registered. Some quality redfish were landed, but among the anglers I spoke to there was concern with the overall abundance of fish as well as the condition of the bay. That sentiment was shared by tournament organizer and TBWK Board member Adam Fernandez in his introduction at the evening's awards ceremony and raffle. A total of 82 fish were weighed in during the two-day tournament including nine snook, the biggest at 25.5 inches.

Seventy-two redfish were entered in the tournament. The biggest, at 34 inches, was caught by Pierson Monetti of the first-place team Crawl Mode with Josh Glidden. The team entered two fish totaling a combined 65 inches. Monet- ti's company, MRIC Spatial, was a platinum sponsor of the tournament. Second place was claimed by Team Not Ready with Leigh West and Brandon Chircop. Their two fish totaled 62.5 inches. Third place was awarded to Team Bar Fly with a two-fish total of 54 inches.

There was great camaraderie, a dinner, a raffle with many fine products and an inspirational presentation by Bill Horn. Horn is vice-chair of the Bonefish and Tarpon Trust (BTT) and former assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish, Wildlife and Parks. He is the author of ["Seasons on the Flats,"](#) ["On the Bow"](#) and many other literary works. Bill has been deeply involved in Everglades restoration for the last 20 years. He's been a major force behind BTT's work on water quality, fisheries management and federal policy. In his speech, he mentioned BTT's recent study of pharmaceutical drugs in bonefish. The study was expanded to include redfish in Florida waters to show the problem was more widespread than the Florida Keys. Tampa Bay was one of the regions sampled and the redfish were found to have some of the highest levels of pharmaceutical drugs, including antidepressants, blood pressure medications, painkillers and a host of other compounds. Horn finished by saying that the technology exists to remove these compounds and emphasized the critical need to implement them before the drugs enter the environment further. Organizations like Tampa Bay Waterkeeper are on the front line of the defense of our littoral environment and deserve the support of anglers and all those who appreciate the threatened coastal ecosystem. The challenge is to make decision-makers aware of the concerns and have them address them at the state and national levels. Your vote is critical to making this a reality. See how your local, state and federal representatives have voted on these issues at the [League of Conservation Voters website](#). As Horn mentioned in his closing statement, "if we don't do this, this might be the last generation of anglers to have the opportunity." Join [Tampa Bay Waterkeeper](#) and be a part of the solution.

Excerpts from **Reel Time: Results in from the 2023 Waterman** By [Rusty Chinnis](#)

# The Leader Isn't Turning Over

By Jonas

One of my students a beginner (casting rather well) recently had an outing casting from a boat. There was the eternal wind blowing and the boat moving and all that. But the main issue was that the leader was misbehaving and didn't turn over. The caster was struggling to lay out the line and the leader straight. The caster had no control over the leader and fly, and never was able to lay the ensemble out straight.

We all have been there at some point in our journey. Now, I did some sleuthing of the equipment. The rod, an old stalwart #9 Sage II was not the issue. The #9 fly line was a new correctly sized one – not the problem. Now, the leader turned out to be a 12' long hand-tied affair with a butt section of 0.024". The fly used was a weighted (bead chain) streamer.

**Length of leader:** Long leaders (10' or more) are frequently advocated by guides and experienced anglers. Yet, as the leader lengthens it gets to be much more difficult to cast. The savants forget those beginners will struggle with long leaders plus the wind and a heavy fly. The leader must work for the angler using it, and it makes no sense to use a long leader if it does not turn over. You are better off with a shorter leader that you can turn over and lay out straight. Even if a long leader is preferable, if the caster can't make it work, it isn't the right leader.

**Butt thickness:** My #9 bonefish fly line has a 0.040" tip diameter (have micrometer will measure). That diameter calls for the butt's leader to be around 70% of the fly line's diameter.  $0.040 \times 0.7 = 0.028$ " for the two to have comparable masses. Our leader's butt was not terrible (0.024") but not optimal either. For optimal transfer of energy from the fly line to the leader, the masses of each at their juncture must be close to the same. And the longer the leader the more important it becomes that the butt is heavy enough.

See <https://everyjonahasawhale.com/blog/your-butt-is-too-small/>

**Heavy fly:** We all know that heavy flies can kick when we cast them. Heavy flies are usually on the big side too and will have more drag. So, using a smaller lighter fly, if possible, will help.

See <https://everyjonahhasawhale.com/blog/casting-a-heavy-fly/>

See <https://everyjonahhasawhale.com/blog/the-fly-line-kick/>

**The caster's ability:** The idiot savants of casting can fling out just about anything – long leaders with big flies no problem. However, beginners can't do that. We must always curtail our advice to the ability of the caster being advised.

**My advice for beginners:** Buy ready-made leaders and forget the advice of the experts they can tie their own leaders, but it takes experience to get there. Ready-made leaders are now high quality and thus you will have fewer knots (it takes experience to tie great knots). Pay attention to the butt thickness. Quality leaders will have the butt diameter printed on the info sheet. A very good bet is that anglers' butts are too thin. If you can't turn over your leader - it is too long and/or fly too heavy/big for your casting abilities. You are in the game with a 9' leader and your preferred fly laid out straight – but not if you have a 12' leader collapsed in a bird's nest.

Your casting abilities at any time are what they are i.e., not a variable, but leader length, butt diameter, and fly can be varied to get the desired outcome. There is no need for self-inflicted wounds or unforced errors. It is difficult enough as it is.

See <https://everyjonahhasawhale.com/blog/take-me-to-your-leader-from-butt-to-fly-through-the-tippet/>

See <https://everyjonahhasawhale.com/blog/ready-made-leaders>



# Walking Bayshore Blvd

My wife and I came to Tampa in 1998 after the Army assigned us to MacDill AFB. Thus, we have resided for the most part in South Tampa, due to the proximity to MacDill. As the MacDill flats offer superb wade fishing opportunities, this worked out really well for me.

We moved to a house a few years ago, off El Prado, located about 1/3 mile from Bayshore. We have taken to walking along Bayshore on most mornings. We go down El Prado and either head south to Gandy or North a ways past Bay-to-Bay. Either way the distance is a little over three miles and helps keep us to keep fit as time marches on.

We often keep an eye out for fish in the bay as we walk and are sometimes rewarded. Of, course it depends on the wind, tide and sun as does our fishing opportunities. If the tide is too low, the fish will not be close enough to the sea wall. A medium tide, mild wind, moving water and sun are best. And, we see most of the fish in the cooler months.

As always, we enjoy spotting fish and watching their behavior, which is sometimes a little unusual. For example, more than once we have observed snook (one or two together) closely following a ray as the ray moves over grass. Pretty cool to see the snook waiting for the ray to spook a tasty snack.

This month, for the first time, we saw big schools of lady fish, laid up on the bottom near the sea wall. I have never seen lady fish settle down like that. They are usually on the move hunting and chasing bait. A big snook also noted the lady fish and cruised slowly among them and tried a quick bite a couple of times, with no luck.

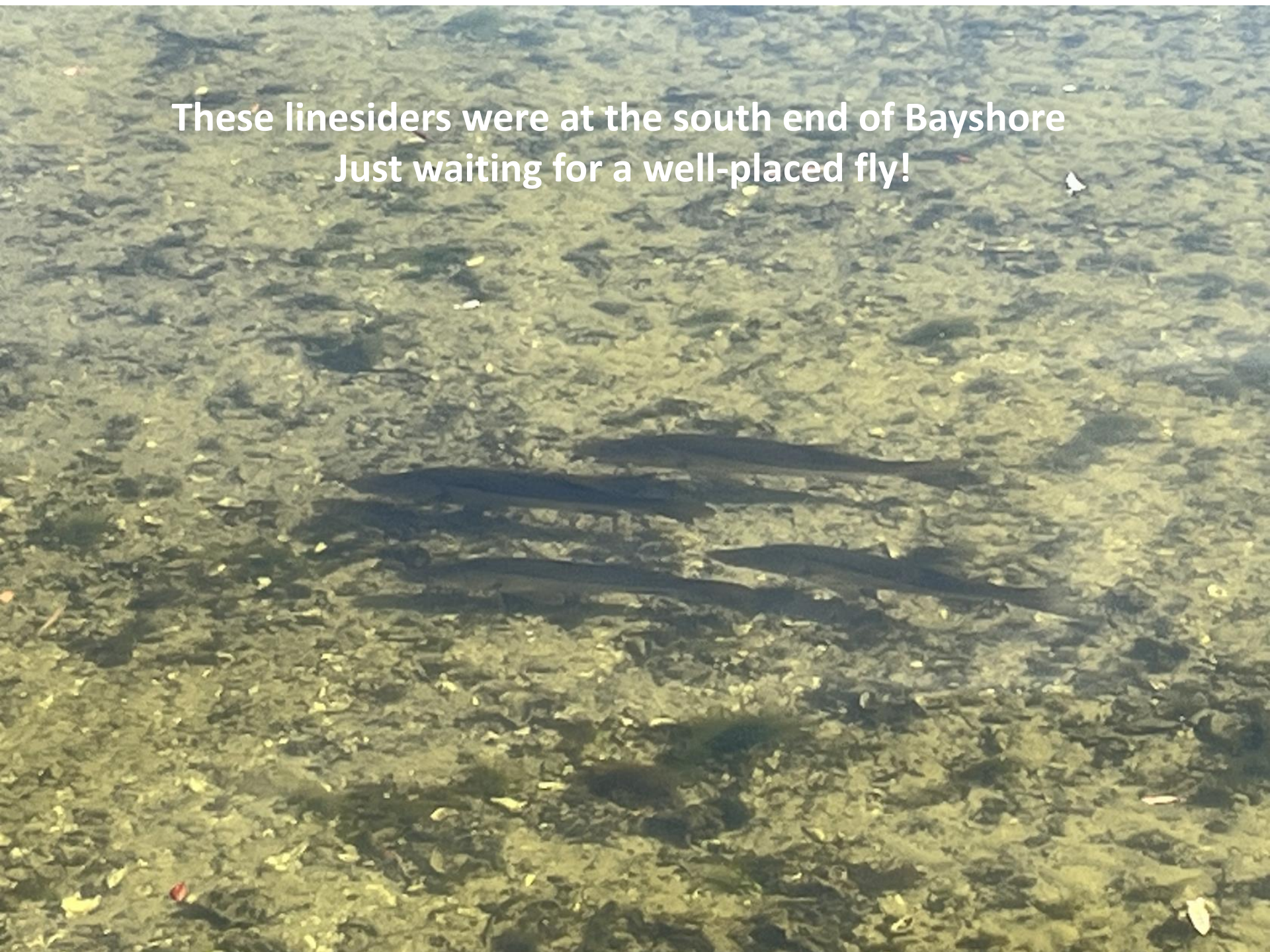
Several spots along the wall are exits for culverts running into the bay. These often will attract sometimes many snook. I think they like the moving water, which also is probably a little warmer in the winter. We have spotted good numbers and many big females at those spots depending on the tide. I keep vowing to fish those spots from my Gheenoe, but have not done so yet.

Other fish we often see are rays and bonnet head sharks, typical of many bay flats. I talked to a fly fisherman one day (despite the no fishing rule) and he talked of seeing sheepshead. And, we only spotted redfish on one occasion. I'm sure they must hang out in the vicinity, but not as often as the snook for some reason.

We also enjoy walking the trails on Weedon Island and often see both snook and reds from the boardwalk overlooks. Additionally, Weedon has a great Nature Center for you to check out.

While Tampa Bay may not be as clean and healthy as needed, fishing is still pretty good. And, my wife and I are happy we can still spot fish in the clear water, especially in the winter. My wife has also gotten quite good at spotting those snook along Bayshore, a valuable skill. Just another reason to count my blessings. //Walt

These linesiders were at the south end of Bayshore  
Just waiting for a well-placed fly!



Tim Elms with a baby tarpon wearing our club shirt and Floyd Holder with a red on the fly. Good job guys!



**Wes and Kelly fished at Crooked and Acklins Trophy Lodge in the Bahamas.** Weather and tides were not ideal, but we caught bonefish. Winds were 15-20 knots most days (one day 25+ knots) and high tide was middle of the day (wish we had listened to Robert's talk last month before we booked so we knew what tosses to look for). Of the more than 100 flies tied, we used less than 10.



## 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!”**

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.

An increase in baitfish has finally lured redfish, trout, and snook into the shallows where they can be caught a little more easily. When fly fishermen exchange information, the definitive question always seems to be, “What fly were you using?” When conditions are favorable for a good bite, several successful anglers will usually be using different fly patterns. Have you ever had a savvy fly fisherman pick up your rod after you have not caught anything and begin to catch fish immediately? I’ve even exchanged rods with someone having a bad day and caught fish with their setup while they continued to struggle with the rod I was using with success. The fly is usually the least important part of the equation. On several recent river trips, snook were hanging very close to or under shoreline structure, such as docks, mangroves, fallen trees, oyster bars, and points. If the fly was not presented within inches of the structure, fish weren’t caught. If a cast close to a fish’s lair landed with a disturbing splash or was picked up too suddenly with a surface rip, the fish ignored the fly and raced to deeper water. Casting accuracy, proper presentation, and minimal disruption will vastly improve your success with the long rod.

**Capt Rick Grasset reports:** Fin-Addict Guide Service, Inc.; E-mail [snookfin@aol.com](mailto:snookfin@aol.com); (941) 923-7799.

There should be good action with reds, trout and snook in skinny water in March as the water warms and baitfish become more plentiful. Look for Spanish and king mackerel, cobia, tripletail and false albacore (little tunny) in the coastal gulf. Night snook fishing in the ICW should also be a good this month.

Look for early season tarpon that may start to show in backcountry areas. These are usually adult resident fish that are making their way out of rivers and creeks. They may be “laid up” or rolling on deep grass flats, on edges of shallow flats or along bars when it is calm. An accurate cast may result in an explosive strike! Look for them in areas of lower Tampa Bay or in Gasparilla Sound on some of the same deep grass flats where you find trout.

Reds should be more active as the water warms and baitfish become more plentiful. Higher tides, as we head into spring, will allow them to spend more time feeding in shallow water. Look for them over shallow grass, along mangrove shorelines and around oyster bars when the tide is high. You should find them in potholes and along sand bars when the tide is low. Fly anglers should score with my Grasset Flats Minnow fly, fished on a 12’ or longer leader. When using a long leader be sure you are able turn it over, otherwise you’ll need to shorten it until you can. The butt section should be at least 50% of the total length of the leader and stiff enough to transfer energy from your fly line to the leader.



## 2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

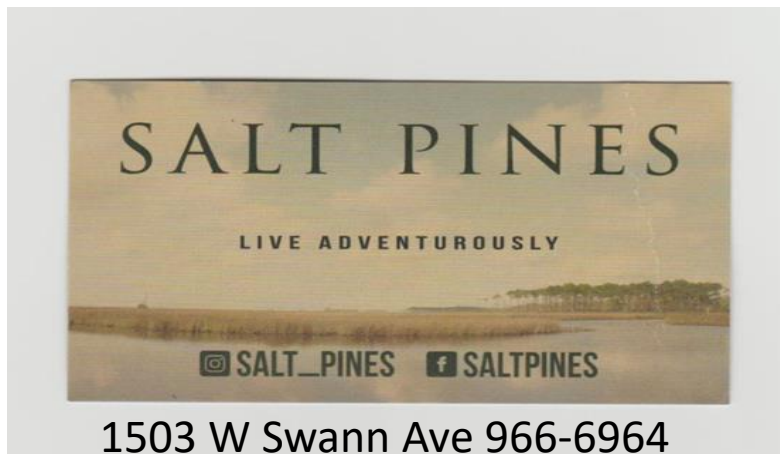
- Jan 14 Casting Clinic
- Jan 14 Red Fly Tournament
- 11 Mar Picnic Island Outing
- 25 Mar Annual Banquet
- June Lake Calm Freshwater Outing
- Oct (virtual) Marine Quest, St Pete
- Oct Carl Hanson Outing
- Nov Chattooga Trip for trout
- Nov Big Gun, Picnic Island
- Dec Play Hooky at the Suncoast Youth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



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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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- REDFISH LANDING GUIDE SERVICE, Capt. John Hand [www.RedfishLandingGuideService.com](http://www.RedfishLandingGuideService.com), (239) 842-7778
- THE FLY GUY, Capt. Pat Damico, (727) 504-8649 ,w [www.captpat.com](http://www.captpat.com), pat4jaws@hotmail.com
- SNOOK FIN-ADDICT GUIDE SERVICE, Capt. Rick Grasset, (941) 923-7799, [www.snookfin-addict.com](http://www.snookfin-addict.com)
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- Carbon Marine, 3916 W. Osborne Ave. Tampa Fl, 33614, 813-870-1234
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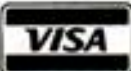
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TBFFC is famous for its value and focus on the sharing of information, experience, and craftsmanship with its members. As a TBFFC member you will enjoy many benefits free or at nominal cost.

- 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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# Member Application

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Please Check: One Year \_\_\_\_\_ Five Year \_\_\_\_\_

Please list names you wish to include in family membership

Annual Dues: \$40.00 Individual Membership

\$50.00 Family Membership

\$150.00 Corporate Single Membership

(includes one membership and Ad Space)

Five-year dues: \$160.00 Individual Membership

\$200.00 Family Membership

Please make check payable to: Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club C/O Walt Durkin at 3401  
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