

Trash and Treasures Auction

Please join us for our Trash and Treasures meeting on 6 February. You may bring items to donate to the club, which we will auction off at the meeting as a club fund raiser. They can be fishing related or not; anything that you do not need and we might sell. As Rick Warfel from the Suncoast club says: "All of us have collected more rods, reels, and gear than we can use. T&T is a great way to find a new home for your excess and help clean up your storage problem." Donate your hidden gems to the club and let us sell them to the highest bidder. Hope to see you there and bring cash or a check to buy stuff. We are looking for a good turnout for this meeting and we welcome Mangrove and Suncoast members also.



Pass on to the club and a lucky member!



**Next meeting 6 Feb 2024
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM**

We will meet at the Northdale Recreation center from 6 to 8 pm. We will resume casting at 5:30 now since we have enough light. We will provide pizza and drinks, so join us for an enjoyable evening. Families and newcomers are welcome to walk in and check out the club. We have also started collecting annual dues in 2024.

Directions to Our Meetings (6:00pm): 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 Bryon's presentation on photography. His tips were interesting and focused on taking a great photo while protecting the fish. We also enjoyed viewing many beautiful photos from his collection. Thanks Bryon!

Thanks for your support to the club and all you do for our sport. Please let us know what we can do a little better.

As you will read, I finally had a couple of good days of wade fishing in January. Try to get out on a nice day on our local flats or any fresh water you can find. Fly fishing is a great way to enjoy nature and forget the stress we face each day in this crazy world.

We have topped off our raffle with new items and lots of fly tying materials, so check it out and maybe buy a few more tickets. Every ticket wins something!

We are collecting annual dues for 2024; \$40 for an individual member. Please pay at your earliest convenience.

All the best and tight lines!

//Walt Durkin 

Fly Fishing Quotes

"Having a fishing rod in your hand is merely an excuse to explore out-of-sight depths and reveal mysteries that previously only existed in dreams." – Fennel Hudson

"Everyone should believe in something. I believe I'll go fishing." – Henry David Thoreau

"Fishing in a place, is a meditation on the rhythm of a tide, a season, an arc of a year, and the seasons of life." – Carl Safina

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TBFFC NEWS & NOTES

Our February meeting will feature a **Trash and Treasures auction**. This is your opportunity to give away fishing stuff you no longer use or need and also buy other stuff. This is a lot of fun and raises money for the club.

In March, we will feature a tie-a-thon, so calling all those who tie flies to join us. Each tier will make six flies and we will auction them off. Please come and learn how to tie and also pick up some winners.

Our April meeting will feature Bob Schorejs, aka "Kayak Bob" who will talk about kayak fishing in our local area.

Our annual banquet is **6 April** and we will join the Suncoast Fly Fishing Club for a joint party. Mark the date on your calendar and more details to come, but you can sign up and pay (\$25) at the next three meetings.

Trout Creek Outing

We will have an informal club outing on Trout Creek on 17 February. Bring a kayak, canoe or fish from the bank. Bring your own lunch and we will meet at noon to eat and tell fishing tales. Trout Creek is located at 12550 Morris Bridge Rd. Thonotosassa, FL 33592

Don Coleman Outing, 30 Dec. Recap

Suncoast reports: "The December outing may have been the most attended (and fished) outing of the year. Bill AuCoin estimated we had about 17 fly fishers who wet their lines. About 35 gobbled up chili at Pavilion 4 on North Beach. And fish were caught. At Fort DeSoto Park Rick Warfel caught a 22-inch spotted seatrout to win the outing award for the longest fish of any species. "

Cypress Park Wade Fishing Class

Our wade fishing class at Cypress last month was a success despite poor weather. Seven club members participated, including three new members; John, Torin and Ed. Thanks to old salts Ted, Jim and Jerry for their expertise and perspective. Over coffee and bagels we covered the basics of wade fishing Cypress and then fished a bit. Overcast skies and wind made it tough, but we got some inexperienced club members off to a good start.



FFI Florida Council Event at BPS Orlando April 13

Dave Olsen from FFI sent us this:

Hello everyone,

“We have secured the Bass Pro Shops in Orlando for an event on April 13th, with an additional setup day on the 12th. We will be allowed use of the conference room, fly shop, and the outside grounds. In addition we will be able to do raffles and silent auctions in an effort to fundraise. I envision (4) or so outside casting demonstrations and fly tiers and a few programs in the conference room. I think we can have a fun packed full day, hopefully raise awareness for FFI and the council, and hopefully raise some money as well. There is no cost to us. Tom Logan has agreed to work with Craig Smothers in an effort to put together some quality tiers, and I will be reaching out to put together some casting programs and a few indoor seminars. Bass Pro Shops fly shop manager John Grasta has agreed to help with promotion as well.

There are a few things we could use from all of you and the clubs:

- Auction / Raffle items – If everyone could acquire at least one item from their club or local area we would be in great shape to raise a bit of money.
- Promote – Any promotion we can get, particularly in the areas of Orlando, Tampa, and Melbourne would be of great help in getting people to turn out.
- We will also need some volunteers to help people find the various program sites, collect contact info of participants, promote raffles / auction items, etc. So if you can help out that would be great.

I will be making contacts for programs this week and will get back to you with that info. I will also start posting to the council's Instagram and Facebook accounts, and any of you that can do the same would be great. Appreciate any suggestions or comments. “ Dave Olson

Layne “Smitty” Smith Passes Away

We are sad to note our long time friend and Suncoast Club member Smitty passed away in late January. Smitty was a kind soul, avid fisherman and an innovative and artistic fly tier. He willingly shared his knowledge and love of fly tying and passed that along to all who knew him. We featured his “golden eye” shrimp in our last newsletter after Robert Fischer caught a big bonefish on it. He tied at many venues: club meetings and also at fly fishing shows. Somewhat of a “foodie” he often shared tasty recipes for our newsletter. In his memory, we will feature a fly and food page on our club website. Here you will find both food and fly instructions; we will launch it with some of Smitty’s contributions we have on file. I hope you will enjoy it as you take time to remember him and his beautiful, effective flies. //Walt



Drifting Your Cast by Jonas

Are you a drifter? You probably aren't. If you don't know what I am talking about you definitely aren't. Generally, casting instructors don't see "natural" drifters - drifting must be taught. "Why teach drifting and how does it affect my cast?" - you might ask. When I tell you - the elite casters all drift, and the distance casters all must drift too – I now have your attention.

Why is drift desirable? It helps smooth out your cast, by reducing slack which makes the casting stroke more efficient. This means that the fly line is straight at the start of the casting stroke. When a fly line is cast with a slack the first part of the casting stroke just straightens the line. It does not move forward until it is straight. We can use drift without drag to widen the casting arc on the last back cast before a delivery cast where the caster intends to shoot as much line as possible. We also use drift and drag when casting long.

The main benefit of drift/drag is to reduce slack, which increases the cast's efficiency. After I learned to drift, I now do so on all casts. It isn't strictly necessary for short casts but a must for long casts. How do we drift? After the stop on the back cast, (and/or forward cast – remember the casts are symmetric) we can rotate the rod back a bit (rotational drift). Some instructors say, "Rotate the rod half an inch back" and refer to this motion as a micro drift. This motion we can call rotational drift. We can rotate the rod from a smidgeon to rotate it horizontally which is a maximal rotational drift. The hand movements are referred to as translational drift. Maximal translational drift is obtained when the casting arm is straight back horizontally. The "creep" where the rod is repositioned to the casting position in the lower picture is obviously not a casting fault and that creep could also be called "rotational drag". Creep is almost always considered to be a fault but not in this case.

Slack: When carrying 60-80' of line there inevitably will be some slack in the back cast that needs to be removed before the forward cast. The best casters, when hauling and casting long, will drift and then drag between casting strokes to remove as much slack as possible. This greatly increases the efficiency of the next cast as slack is minimal when the casting stroke/haul begin. Note that we drift/drag on both the front and the back cast. It allows for more line to be carried but only if used on both front and back casts. Whichever carry (front or back) is shorter will become the limiting factor.

Creep: Drift will cure creep (too early rod rotation) but for most creepers, that is certainly not the simplest cure. Just not moving the rod at all during the pause is much simpler and cures creep too. It is difficult to teach beginners or intermediates drift as a cure for creep. For some reason, stopping and then continuing to rotate the rod in the same direction as the line is going is difficult for most people.

Check out Jonas's blog for more tips: <https://everyjonahasawhale.com/blog/>

A Golden Day at Cypress

I have struggled to find good weather days to fish the Cypress flat, so when I saw bright skies on Saturday (20 Jan) I told my wife I wanted to give it a try. She helped me get ready and sent me off with a peanut butter sandwich about 9:30. It was a bit of a late start as the tide was low about seven, but I hoped the strong NE wind would keep the tide low. Few cars were in the lot and none of the usual suspects that I could tell. Approaching the flat on the north side, I could see only one angler out there braving the 15 to 20 mph wind and the tide was still very low with the bar showing. I walked along the bar and eased out about 100 feet from the other guy. He was facing my direction and making a few casts, so I was confident he was seeing fish. Sure enough, after a few minutes I spotted the school making nervous water and heading toward me. I tried a left handed cast into that wind, but came up short several times. I can cast pretty good left handed, but not so well into the wind. Anyway, the school turned and went back toward the other fisherman whose name I found out was Matthew. So, I eased back out to the bar and circled around him and went down the flat about 75 yards to fish back down with the wind. I did not see any fish as I worked toward Matthew, but he was still casting, so I knew the fish were still in his vicinity. He was stationed about 2/3 of the way down the flat in a sweet spot with a little deeper water. I set up again upwind from him this time and about 100 feet away. He started casting straight out and then towards me a little. Soon, I spotted the school, maybe 50 reds heading toward me. I laid out a left handed cast about 60 feet and 30 feet in front of the fish. They kept coming and when they got around the fly I started bumping it. I try to move it an inch or two, stop a couple of seconds and repeat. After 10 tense seconds, I felt the take and set the hook. I was fishing a new rod for me at least, a 7 weight Sage One. This is a classic rod with 10 year old technology, but still one of the best sticks around. After setting the hook, the rod bent in a beautiful arc and the fight was on. This was a strong 26 inch red that I played carefully for 10 minutes as I wanted to land him. We had not eaten a red fish in six months and I told my wife I would bring one home. After confirming he was in the legal slot (18-27 inches) I put him on my fish gripper on a tether and he stayed with me all morning awaiting his fate. The fish had eaten a Bonefish Bitter fly I had tied a couple of days earlier. I went on to catch five reds that morning and Matthew did the same, including a couple of doubles. The tide was coming in good about noon and I saw some reds go between us and over the bar to the inside grass. I decided to call it a day and said goodbye to Matthew. I mentioned to new member Torin my good day and invited him to come on Sunday. Jerry came also and the three of us went out about 8:00. If you remember, Sunday was very cold (36 degrees) and windy. We found a smaller school of reds, but did not have another epic day. Jerry did hook two fish and I saw one other guy catch one. Torin also hooked one red on a tan Rat Fly I had given him, but unfortunately, it came off. Nonetheless, well-done Torin on your first try on the Cypress flat.

Bonefish Bitter for Redfish

I have caught six reds on this fly, so is this the secret fly? Not likely, but I will stick with it as long as it continues to work. Here is how to tie this quick and easy fly. I use a size six jig hook with medium bead chain eyes, but adjust the eyes as needed. Tie in the eyes first on your jig hook on top just below the eye. Move thread back and tie in the wooly critter at the far bend and wrap it forward. Get plenty toward the back. Leave about 1/8 inch space and tie in the legs, four on each side. Build up the head around the eyes with thread. Now tie in a small bundle of deer body hair on top of the legs and pull down firmly. The hair will splay on top and you are done. I tie it off and add some UV epoxy on the head. You end up with a buggy looking thing with legs, but the reds seem to approve. I have been tying it in light to medium brown with either gold or black eyes. Legs are black and white, two long and two short on each side.



Here are photos of two of the six reds I caught on the bonefish bitter at Cypress. Both days were sunny, with a low incoming tide, casting at pretty big schools of redfish. Get the fly out in front of them and bump it when you think they can see it and hope for a tug. Use a long leader on the clear, sunny days. Lots of fun and the best of luck with this fly!



Club member Ken Moser continues to volunteer at the Tampa Aquarium and build beautiful mosaics for them. Here is the latest aquarium piece he did. It represents the front of the Florida Aquarium with its iconic dome and is going to the CEO.



Fishing Report and Forecast

“What a great time to go fishing!”

Shallow Water Fly Fishing

An issue that will improve your fishing charter's success is to notify your guide well in advance and give him or her what days you will be available. Calling and saying I will be in your area this coming weekend and can only fish on Sunday morning will greatly affect your trip outcome. The date may already be booked, the weather could be terrible with rain and strong winds, the water may be muddy with the temperature dropping suddenly, and tides may be very poor. Wind direction alone can determine many of our fishing locations. We fly fish in relatively shallow water so reckless boat and jet ski activity is getting to be much more of a hazard as well as a safety concern. Weekends usually begin midday Friday and extend well into late Sunday. This is why weekdays are always preferred. Rather than multiple emails and text messages, a phone call soon after your initial contact will give both of you some time to get to know how realistic both expectations are. Telling me you want to catch a 100-pound tarpon in the middle of winter with no saltwater fly fishing experience is not going to happen. I always encourage people to bring any equipment they may already own which can often be the cause of many of the problems they have experienced in the past. Several fly rods completely rigged are always with me to cover multiple situations.

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

Capt Rick Grasset reports: Trout and redfish should be good shallow water options this month. You may also find trout along with blues, Spanish mackerel, pompano and flounder on deep grass flats. Look for sheepshead, flounder, reds and more around docks. Catch and release night snook fishing around lighted docks in the ICW may be a good option if it's not too cold.

You may also find snook in rivers, creeks or canals this month. Fishing may be good in these areas on a blustery day when it isn't fit to fish anywhere else. I like wider profile flies in these areas due to the baitfish that may be found there. Fly anglers should score with baitfish patterns, such as Lefty's Deceiver, EP flies or my Grasset Deep Flats Bunny, fished on a sink tip fly line. Fish the deep spots, usually in bends in the river, for the best action.

You might find reds in potholes or along the edges of bars and shallow flats when the tide is low. As the tide rises, they will feed higher on shallow flats, particularly on sunny afternoons. Fly anglers should score with lightly weighted flies on floating lines with 10'-12' leaders. My Grasset Flats Minnow fly is my "go to" fly for fishing skinny water. You may also find big trout in skinny water in the same places you find reds. The same flies and techniques that you use to target reds will work for big trout in those areas. I release all over slot trout since they are usually females and I feel that they are important to the health of our trout fishery. Big fish, spawn big fish!

Fin-Addict Guide Service, Inc.; E-mail snookfin@aol.com; (941) 923-7799.



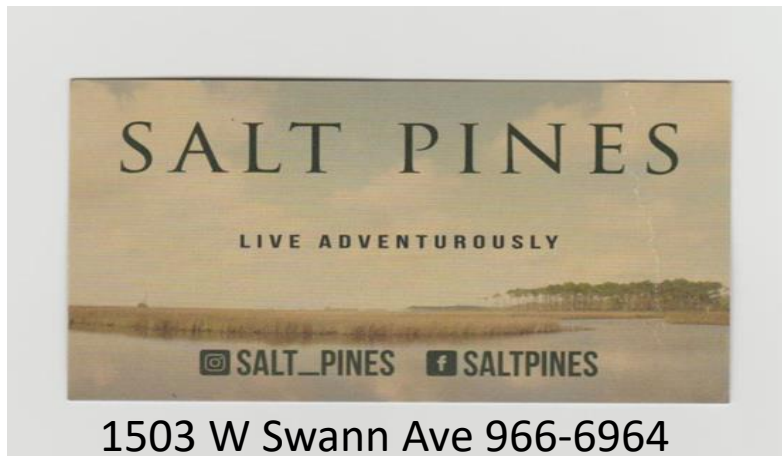
2023/24 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Jan 6 Cypress Park Wade Clinic
- Jan 20 Red Fly Tournament
- Feb 17 Trout Creek Outing
- Apr 6 Annual Banquet
- July Lake Calm Freshwater Outing
- Oct Marine Quest, St Pete
- Oct Carl Hanson Outing
- Nov Chattooga Trip for trout
- Nov Casting Clinic, Egan Park
- Nov Big Gun, Picnic Island
- Dec Play Hooky at the Suncoast Youth Center
- Dec 16 Don Coleman Outing, Ft Desoto

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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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\$50.00 Family Membership

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(includes one membership and Ad Space)

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