

Winter Fly Fishing

Captain Rick Grassett

Please join us for an interesting and informative meeting. Captain Rick will talk about winter fly fishing, casting, line management tips and some destination trip info.

Rick is a good friend of the club and retired after 35 years guiding in the Sarasota area. He is still actively fishing on his own, as well as instructing fly casting and teaching at CB's Outfitters Orvis-Endorsed schools. He also has hosted destination trips for many years to Montana and Bahamas.

We will also raffle off a two-hour casting lesson with Rick at our meeting. Please come and meet one our premier Tampa Bay guides.



**Next meeting 3 February 6:30 -
8:30 PM**

We meet at the Northdale Recreation Center from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. 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. **Please note we start collecting annual dues in January and February. Please bring cash or a check.**

Directions to Our Meeting: (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

Now is the time to buy your tickets for our annual banquet on 28 March. The cost is \$25 per person and we will have them available at our next two meetings.

Jim Dye is managing our club Facebook page, which we have updated and members are now posting pictures. Check it out as a good source of fishing news.

We are seeking a speaker for March and welcome your ideas. April is our **Trash and Treasures** meeting so look around the house and garage for those items you no longer use and bring them to the club. For this meeting, you will bring and donate to our club fishing stuff you no need or use and we will auction it off at a low cost. This will unclutter your garage/house to your spouse's delight and also pass on the items to another club member to use and enjoy. This is a fun meeting with spirited bidding for interesting items. Please join us and bring cash or check.

Sight fishing has been especially good this winter and I hope you found your way to a local flat. Please let us know if you need more help or a fishing buddy.

//Walt Durkin



Fly Fishing Quotes

“Every cast is an opportunity for a new adventure, a new memory waiting to happen.” – Ethan Parker

“Time spent on the water is never a waste; it’s an investment in peace.” – Benjamin Cook

“Good fishing is often about understanding the environment and making the right choices.” – Jacob Alton

“The best part about fly fishing is that you never know what you’ll catch.” – Liam Carter

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President: Walt Durkin

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Pat Damico	727-504-8649
Robert Fischer	813-495-5685
Ginny Fischer	813-495-5685
Bruce Anderson	813-786-3902
Jim Dye	941-730-3647
Keaton Anderson	404-313-7820

January Meeting Photos

Twenty-four members attended our meeting where I presented an overview of Ted's and my trip to Idaho to catch wild west-slope cutthroat trout. I hope you found the presentation interesting and informative.



Annual Banquet 28 March

The Suncoast will host our annual banquet this year in St Petersburg. The date is 28 March and tickets are \$25 per person. Our theme is 'Legends of Fly Fishing' and our guest speaker is Captain Steve Huff who happens to be a legend himself. He began guiding in 1968 in the Florida Keys after graduating from the University of Miami with a degree in marine biology. In 2010, he became the first full time professional fishing guide ever inducted into the IGFA Fishing Hall of Fame. His insatiable curiosity and passion for being on the water have driven him and his clients to nearly 50 years of great friendships and fishing. This is an annual fund raiser for our clubs as well as a great time. We will have many raffle items to include gear and trips. Additionally, we will offer a custom bamboo rod. Buy your tickets at our next two meetings or online at the Suncoast website. Please join us for good food and fun and to meet one of the greats of our sport. //Walt



TBFFC NEWS & NOTES

Do pay your club dues! Please note we start collecting annual club dues in January. Your \$40 gets a good return with informative guest speaks, free guide trips, a great banquet and the camaraderie of other fly- fishing aficionados. Please pay at a meeting or find instructions at the end of the newsletter.

The 6th Annual Waterman Fly Fishing Tournament Friday/Saturday, Feb 20/21. The Waterman is a two-day, fly fishing-only, catch & release redfish tournament with an optional Snook Calcutta with a 50/50 cash payout. And, a fundraiser for their worthy cause.

Jack Hexter is selling a new Yamaha four stroke motor for charity priced at \$1250. Contact Chet Jasak, Fish-On Clubs, Wish-to-Fish Ph. 727-385-3193

Club member John Lookabill has a flats boat and is seeking fisherman to go out with him on the boat. He can also help new folks with their casting. You can meet John at the next meeting to exchange contact info.

Douglas Fly Rods is still offering us a club discount (see page 8). Send an email to Chelsae at: clehman@douglasoutdoors.com. Tell her you are a club member and ask how to get the discount.



Catch of the Month Photo Contest

To all members of the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club. Here is your chance to be on the front page of the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club website! Each month we will review and display the best member photo of your fishy catch. The best photo will be judged on the quality of fish caught, composition of the image as well as the excitement of the moment of the catch.

Send all photos with subject line Photo Contest along with your first and last name to: Tampabayffc@gmail.com

Be sure to show the lucky angler, the fish and lure (hopefully a fly) in your photo. All entries will receive a raffle ticket for a nice prize, which we will award at our annual Holiday Party. Jerry Kells is shown on the Cypress flat.



Club Trip and Outings

One of our new members had questions on trips and outings, so I will try to explain it here.

We have several local outings each year for club members to learn and to have someone to fish with. Additionally, we do some joint outings with the Suncoast Club. For example, they will have an outing on 21 February at the Cypress Point Park and we are invited. Suncoast will provide lunch and drinks. We also join the Suncoast for an outing on the Hillsborough River on the third Saturday in October. And, we are invited to their Ft Desoto outing each December.

Additionally, we host an outing on Lake Calm each summer to fish for bass and panfish. In November, we have our Big Gun casting event, which is a fun and interesting outing. In December, we have our annual kayak outing at the Apollo Youth Center. Here, we kayak, fish and tour the facility. We also have at least one outing at Cypress in early winter to kick off the winter sight fishing. We welcome input on any additional outings for the club.

We also have an outing to the Chattooga River in early November for six days. The barracks holds 9 people and is usually full each year. You have to get a separate cabin if you wish to join in and we limit the group to 12 people. We can show you where and how to fish the river. Let me know if you are interested.

Other big trips to the Bahamas, Mexico or Belize are arranged informally among club members and are not sponsored by the club. Folks agree on a lodge and a time and everyone makes their own reservations. If you want to join a bigger trip like this let us know and we will hook you up.
//Walt

Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club Google Group

Keep in contact with your fishing friends through the TBFFC Google Groups!

This is a closed discussion between current club members that have joined the TBFFC Google Groups. This allows communication directly with other group members with anything related to fishing, outings, trips or anything fishy! To join the TBFFC Google Group, you will need an invitation to join.

- To be invited, send an email with your first and last name and email address that you want to communicate through to: Bruce Anderson

sightcaster@gmail.com

- Once I receive your email, I will send an invite to your email address with an invitation to join the Group. Click on the invitation Link, and your email will be added to the group.

You will need a Google account to have access to the TBFFC Group. If you have a Gmail address, you already have a Google account. If you do not use Gmail, you can set up a Google account without using Google email. This can be done by doing a search for Google Sign in. If you attempt to sign in to Google without an existing account, a create account option will appear. Click this and create a Google account.

To access the TBFFC Group you must be logged into your Google account. So, be sure to log in first.

Next in the address bar type: Groups.Google.com This will direct you to your Google Group home page. In the center of this page will be a list of all the groups you are a member, including the TBFFC Group. Click on the TBFFC group, and all the current discussions will be listed. A new discussion can be started by clicking on the New Conversation tab at the top left of the screen. If you experience any issues logging in or going through the process, please reach out to me.

Bruce Anderson

Fly Fishing Tip for February

I fished the Bahamas for a week in January and thought my casting was a little sub-par. This reminded me of how important practice is even for someone who fishes a lot. For example, on this trip I needed to make quick, accurate cast to distances of 50 feet. I heard my guide say “too short” more than once. What I could have done in preparation was go out in my boat and practice what I would do on the trip; i.e. a quick pickup and accurate cast. Additionally, my double haul was a little weak. Again, some good pre-trip practice time was in order. On a big, costly trip like that it pays to be as ready as you can be. Finally, my fly line was sinking a little and the guide was having trouble seeing it. Maintaining your line is important and I forgot to clean mine before the trip. Luckily, Robert Fischer had line cleaner and was able to help me out.

On another note, I notice the red fish at Cypress were spooky as usual. They often turned away as they approached my fly and fly line. I think they saw my line in that clear water and were alerted. Your best shot is head on with the fish coming toward you. Your fly line will be much less visible to these approaching fish. If the fish are coming more parallel to you then try not to over cast where they will spot your line. Use a long leader, 12 feet for example, and try to show them just the fly when they get close. Single and double fish are always the toughest to catch. Look for schools of fish to present your fly to. This is your best opportunity to hook up. Those big, cruising singles are exciting to see and a real challenge to catch!

All the best and I hope to see you out there. //Walt

Douglas Fly Rod sent us a 40% off deal. Read the details below and let me know if you would like to buy one of their rods. They cost \$500 to \$900 retail. //Walt

Hi Tampa Bay Fly Fishers,

I hope you're doing well. My name is Chelsea and I'm reaching out from Douglas Outdoors, the makers of the **award-winning SKY G** and **DXF Gen2** fly rods. We've been expanding our presence in Florida and wanted to connect with your club, given your members' strong focus on saltwater fly fishing.

Our Douglas Saltwater Series rods were built specifically for the demands of Florida's fisheries, engineered for long, accurate casts in windy conditions and with salt-resistant components that stand up to tarpon, redfish, snook, and bonefish.

I did attach our complete fly rod digital catalog, but more specifically **page 15** outlines ALL our saltwater fly rods that we offer. To introduce your club to Douglas, we'd like to extend an **exclusive offer** just for your members, special pricing (40% off MSRP) on all Douglas saltwater fly rods.

If this sounds like a good fit, simply reply to this email and we'll get your group set up with usernames for our portal right away all we will need are email addresses to get them signed up. We'd love to see Douglas rods in the hands of your anglers this season and to support your club's events however we can.

Tight lines,

Chelsea Lehman

Douglas Outdoors

43 County Rt 59 Phoenix, NY 13135

o:315-216-9584 | c:315-399-7307



Cypress Park January Fishing

The fishing has been especially good on the January low tides at Cypress. Many schools of redfish showed up and multiple club members were able to catch them. Jerry, Ellie, Cigar Rob, Jim, Ken and Ted were some of the persistent anglers who fished these better-than-usual tides. February will be the last good month of the winter, so try to get out there. Don't get caught wishing instead of fishing. //Walt



From top left, Jerry, Ellie, Ted, Walt and one masked bandit, Rob I think. FYI, Ted caught four reds in one day!

P.S. Ellie joined the club about 4 years ago and I gave him his first lesson. He's become a fine fly fisherman in a short time.

Club member Matt gives us this input: "It has been an eventful start to the year with good negative morning lows and cool weather. There are many schools of top/over slot fish sitting around a dozen or less with larger fish solo or in pairs. I have not seen many of these fish tailing but they are still ready to eat with small dark patterns over the sand or grass. At high tide, large schools of rat reds can be found over the grass and are hungry for almost anything. Larger fish still try to push as shallow as possible, getting close to the mangroves and oysters, but are incredibly spooky. Scattered high 20s to low 30-inch snook can be found in these areas too but I have not managed to entice any. Have also seen multiple small flounders around sandbars at mid to higher tides. Doubled up with Kevin early this month at Cypress and landed another at Picnic Island."



Swains Lodge, Mangrove Cay

Four club members traveled to the Bahamas to fish for bonefish 10-17 January. The lucky anglers were Walt Durkin, John Lookabill, Robert Fischer and Tony Piazza. We had a great week with fairly good weather; mostly sunny and only one rain day. The lodge and guides were good and the food was excellent. We caught numerous bonefish and had a super time. //Walt



Fishing Report and Forecast

“What a great time to go fishing!”

Winter Fishing

Winter is always a real test for shallow-water fishermen especially when using a fly rod. Most fish species will easily engulf a shrimp impaled on a hook in front of their nose but not expend much energy to chase a fly. There are several ways to increase your odds. Always consult tide charts, reliable, but affected by winds. Southerly winds will speed the incoming tide and slow the outgoing tide. Winds will stir up the gulf and cause incoming tides to lack water clarity. In dirty water use large bulky flies that push water causing fish to notice their presence at greater distances. Darker fly patterns using black, purple, and brown with a little flash will be more productive. Work flies slower and incorporate some weight to put the pattern at the fish's level which is usually close to the bottom. A perfect fly presentation near the surface will get little interest from a cold, lethargic fish hugging the bottom in 5 or 6 ft of water. Use sink-tip fly lines available from most manufacturers instead of the more common floating line to make this easier. Warmer water will be the key to locating active fish. When wading, kayaking, or in a boat carrying an inexpensive pool thermometer and using it frequently will be an advantage. It is not uncommon to find water temperatures on productive flats several degrees warmer than similar locations that seemed devoid of active fish.

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

Fishing Report

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 might find reds in potholes, along the edges of bars or tailing on 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.

SNOOK FIN-ADDICT GUIDE SERVICE, Capt. Rick Grasset, (941) 923-7799, www.snookfin-addict.com (923-7799).



2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Jan 24 Fly Casting Clinic
- Jan 17 Red Fly Tournament
- Feb 20-21 Waterman Tournament
- Feb 21 Cypress Park Outing w/Suncoast
- Mar 28 Annual Banquet
- May Lake Calm Freshwater Outing
- Oct 17 Carl Hanson, Hillsborough River
Rotary Park and Trout Creek
- 7-13 Nov Chattooga Trip for trout
- Nov Big Gun, Picnic Island
- Dec Kayaking Suncoast Youth Center
- Dec Suncoast 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.

- BARBED STEEL CHARTERS, Capt. Bryon Chamberlin, (813) 361-8801, captbryon@yahoo.com..
- REDFISH LANDING GUIDE SERVICE, Capt. John Hand www.RedfishLandingGuideService.com, (239) 842-7778
- THE FLY GUY, Capt. Pat Damico, (727) 504-8649 ,w www.captpat.com, pat4jaws@hotmail.com
- SNOOK FIN-ADDICT GUIDE SERVICE, Capt. Rick Grassett, (941) 923-7799, www.snookfin-addict.com
- Tampa Fishing Outfitters, 3916 W. Osborne Ave, Tampa, FL; 813-870-1234, tampafishingoutfitters.com

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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

Fly Fishing Guides

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

Fly Casting Coaches

South Tampa

Walt Durkin.....813-853-5870

North Tampa

Jonas Magnusson.....361 903 2846

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

Leigh West813-971-8697

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

St. Petersburg

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

Member Application

Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club

Name: _____

Date: _____

Mailing address: _____

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: \$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 W. Vasconia St, Tampa, FL 33629