

Long Casts

Southern Council Federation of Fly Fishers

SPRING ISSUE

March, 2003



THE PREZ SEZ

My fly fishing life has always been reflective of the other events in my day to day affairs as I relate then to the very character of those in our sport. After 9/11, I tried to express these feelings in an article in our club newsletter. I think these feelings are worth repeated as the threat of war looms again. This and the recent tragedies in Chicago and Rhode Island (by the time you read this they to may be also a clouded memory) tend to numb my enjoyment of 1)ur sport and questions the importance of trivial setbacks in our lives. This same numbness came over me on the eve of Desert Storm. Having lived during the cold war and all ensuing hot ones., I offer a perspective many of you were not burdened with as it relates to the privilege of enjoying fly fishing.

WINDOWS ON THE WORLD WTC NUMBER 2, NEW YORK, NY

A scant 10 miles from my birthplace (Jackson Heights in Queens) I have many times enjoyed the sunset, rattling ice cubes in a Jack and Coke at "Windows" atop WTC Number 2. As recently as this past July, my wife Tracie and I along with our niece, Brittany, spent a week at Number 3 WTC (the Marriott) nestled between the towers. Little did I know it was to be our last such experience. Since 1976, millions have enjoyed this spectacular view of New York Harbor and the Statue of Liberty, a seemingly small child's toy a mile or so away.

Reflecting on this as a fly fisher and hundreds of friendships I have made in our sport I am brought to an awakening of a single trait common to all our fellow fishing friends. This being a deep sensitivity to the feelings of others and even deeper awareness of the fragile mortality of our environment and mankind in general.

When we, as a group, are faced with the reality of life such as the catastrophic losses of life in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania this past month, the profound effect of this most tragic loss and pain will certainly stay with us longer and deeper than most, not that the others are any less concerned in the short haul.

This is not necessarily a concept of any religion or moral tenet, but simply the personality of the fly fisher surfacing in sympathy with their fellow creatures on earth. As such, all of us as a fraternity, pray for those affected by this tragedy as well as the thousands yet to be involved (Maybe only children now) in the years to come. In your next "quiet time" streamside you may wish to consider the above for just a few moments.

With this in mind it's difficult to find a meaningful topic to write about, however, the following experience is an attempt to offer a lighter moment.

THE FISH PHOTO

All who fish have landed and released that trophy fish without a witness or camera to record the memory. Events on a recent trip to Cancun took this frustration to a new level with my wife Tracie. Her very first hook up with a tarpon (10/12 pound class) was a complete success with camera clicking away through the entire-battle by yours truly. Rod bending images were recorded many times as well as the one after the 30 minute war, "Fish In The Net Picture". Now the coop d' Gras picture "Fish In Hand". Noting I had 4 frames left, all were taken of a lifetime achievement to land a tarpon on a fly rod, By now you are chuckling Maler didn't have

continued pn page 2 "The Prez Sez"

About Long Casts

Long Casts is published four times per year by the Southern Council of the Federation of Fly Fishers.

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OPPS

In the winter issue of the Long Casts, we included a list of supporters for the 2003 Conclave. We inadvertently over looked one of our long time and generous supports. **Feather Craft Fly Fishing** in St. Louis, MO. So, Ed and Bob we apologize for our over site and we do appreciate your generosity for our conclave.

“The Prez Sez” from page 1
film in the camera, YES I Did! Maler didn't have the lens cap off, YES I DID! Maler didn't have the auto-focus on, YES I DID! You should be getting the idea by now that something went terribly wrong and this event somehow went unrecorded and it was, of course my fault, incurring the wrath of Tracie Maler for life. Naturally, she had no further strikes or hook ups the next two days and I had nine without a boated fish.

Retrieving the film from Walgreens a few short hours after their highly trained technicians had so carefully processed the film, the "Fish In Hand" pictures were missing. All others were perfect. Walgreens had clipped off the last 4 negatives without any explanation and they were trashed! And you guessed it, that was my fault.

THE BUNK HOUSE

Regrettably, we have had little response from our clubs to the project Questionnaire but fund-raising has almost \$10,000 in commitments! (Usually it's the other way around). Further, it is rumored but not confirmed that several local individuals have some Questions as to the concept. With or without merit, the project is temporally tabled until the clubs are united in support and we can assure those in opposition that this project will benefit everyone.

THE "LONG CASTS"

We have a new editor, at least temporarily, to take over for Steve Fritz who has served in this role for the Southern Council for eight years. My deepest appreciation to Steve for his work and his many other unsung efforts on the board and at our conclaves. Harvey Ragsdale has assumed the interim role as our editor and we encourage everyone to assist Harvey in this position hoping he will agree to remain full time.

LANDERS ISLAND

On February 14th, the Arkansas Nature Alliance won a small, but significant, victory halting the development of this property in the White River near Mountain View, Arkansas. Complete details can be found on the “Friends of the Norfolk and White River” website.

BEGINNERS FLY FISHING MANUAL

The Mid South Fly Fishers have assembled a written booklet to use as a primer for their beginners introduction to fly fishing classes held three times yearly. Mike Stark, club President, is offering this booklet to any sac club desiring to review or adopting it for their use. Email me to order from MSFF and I will pass it along.

CONCLAVE 2003

The SOC board is meeting during the Sowbug Roundup to address the planning of this event. Contact Pat Smith for details if you want to contribute to the efforts of the board. Otherwise, everything is on schedule for another great event

Roger Maler

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Guide Lines and Qualifications for Nominees of the Southern Council Awards

Man of the Year: An award presented -annually to the man who has demonstrated unusual devotion to the Southern Council and, through his devotion, has benefitted the Southern Council, the FFF and/or his club.

Woman of the Year: An award presented annually to the woman who has demonstrated unusual devotion to the Southern Council and, through her devotion, has benefitted the Southern Council, the FFF and/or her club.

Federator of the Year: An award presented annually to that person who has supported the Southern Council and the FFF, and has recruited new members to each organization. Other reasons are also appropriate.

Club of the Year: An award presented annually to a club affiliated with the FFF Southern Council for outstanding projects and activities that have contributed most to the Council in some manner. Examples include, but are not limited to, conservation, education and membership projects and activities.

Fly Tyer of the Year: An award presented annually to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the art of fly tying.

Junior Fly Tyer of the Year: An award presented annually to an individual 15 years of age or younger who has made a significant contribution to the art of fly tying.

Teacher of the Year: An award presented annually to that individual who has passed along the art of fly fishing to others, whether in the form of fly tying, casting, or any of the other fly-fishing arts and sciences.

FFF Southern Council Conservation Award: An award or awards made to individuals, groups or organizations that have made extraordinary contributions to the conservation of our fisheries resources. Need not be given annually if no worthwhile recipients are available.

Friend(s) of the Southern Council: An award or awards given to an individual, individuals, group, or groups who have befriended the Southern Council in some way. Nominees must not be a member of the FFF and need not be a member of the FFF. Need not be given annually if no worthwhile recipients are available.

Tall Tale-Teller Award: Award presented annually to that individual who is the best, most vocal tall-tale teller in the Southern Council.

SOUTHERN COUNCIL AWARD NOMINATIONS

Nominations for the Annual Southern Council Awards are due June 20, 2003. Please submit your nomination entries as soon as possible; If you are a club officer you should consider it your duty to make certain that your club members worthy of these awards are nominated. A list of the awards and requirements for nomination follow at the end of this article and on the Southern Council web site. Any Southern Council member in good standing may submit nominations. Please try to limit the nomination letters to no more than one page and submit a separate nomination letter for each candidate. Nominations may be submitted via U.S. Mail or E-mail. Either way your submittal will be acknowledged.

This year's timetable for the Southern Council Nomination and Awards is as follows:

1. Nomination submittals due (to Brian Ellis, e-mail or U.S. Mail) , June 20, 2003.
2. All nomination letters posted on the Southern Council Web Site and ballots mailed to club contacts and Southern Council Officers- June 29, 2003
3. Clubs and Officers discuss the nominations and make voting - decisions, June 30th -September 14th, 2003.
4. Ballots returned to Pat Smith (SOC Managing Director) - September 15,2003 **-Deadline**
5. Awards Banquet - October 4, 2003

Please send your nomination letters to me at the address below.
 Brian Ellis, VP. Communication 2216 Viewroyal Dr.
 St. Louis, MO 63131 (314) 822-1819
 E-mail: brain.j.ellis@boeing.com



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Southern Council Outreach

**By Sheryl Knight
Outreach Chair**

Where to start? Where to start? Let's start with the 200! Southern Council Conclave. Our speaker, Jennifer Olsson, provided a wonderful Friday night presentation and outstanding clinics and presentations during the rest of the conclave. Thank you, Jennifer. The 2002 Conclave also saw a record setting raffle and auction at the Outreach Luncheon (hosted by the Fort Worth Fly Fishers), the first Outreach Fly Plate and brisk sales of the 2002 Southern Council Cookbook. Speaking of the cookbook we have reached the "break even" point. Now every cookbook sold is pure profit - Pat say's we have nine boxes left so don't hesitate, the order form is on the Southern Council website, www.southerncouncilfff.org.

I would like to thank the members of the Fort Worth Fly Fishers for providing the funds that Cheryl Farrell and I needed to decorate and provide the table favors at the Outreach Luncheon. Also, those individuals, Johnny Walker and Cosette Kelly, to name two, who were of enormous assistance in both set up and tear down at the Senior Center. Also, our sincere thanks to our Auctioneer, Johnny Chamness; what would our auction be without you? So many people just pitch in without being asked, providing raffle and auction items, selling raffle tickets and stepping in to cover a myriad of last minute details - THANK YOU ALL!

Now for 2003. First, our Outreach speaker will be Maggie Merriman. Maggie, if you don't know her is a fly casting instructor that divides her time between Montana and California. In 1995, she started the FFF National Women's Educational Fly Fishing Program and is the National Coordinator for this program. She currently is writing a column for the "Angler's Journal" magazine and is editing the fly fishing section of the new Outdoor Women Magazine that will be debuting soon on Outdoors Online. Maggie will be presenting several fly-casting clinics at this year's conclave. It is our hope that many of our Outreach members can benefit from Maggie's instruction.

The 2003 Outreach Luncheon is being hosted by the Mid-South Fly Fishers. This group has some great plans and I, for one, can't wait to see what they have in store for us. Other Outreach programs that are being planned for the 2003 Southern Council Conclave include: the ever popular Dutch Oven Cooking' a fly-tying clinic with Diane Fozdar-Blair, Sister Carol Anne Corly, Sherry Steele and Cheryl Farrell; a Digital Photography program; and possibly a Sports Medicine program. There is one program that I would like to mention and its success relies on your active participation. We have scheduled a Fly Fishing Collectible Roadshow, hosted by Dennis Galyardt. Your help will be required for the Roadshow to be a success. Please bring your fly fishing collectibles for Dennis to appraise.

Also, if you would like to have your fly appear in the Second Annual Outreach Fly Plate, please forward your fly to Pat Smith or myself. We will need all submissions by May 1, 2003 if they are to be included in the plate. This was a significant money raiser last year so please help us out again.

Sheryl Knight
Outreach Chair
2810 Monthaven Drive
Arlington, TX 76001

Pat Smith, Managing Director
FFF Southern Council
2603 Buford Spur Road
Mountain Home, AR 72653

Finally, we are also looking for anyone that is involved in Girl Scouts. Susan Halblom needs your help. The Federation is trying to establish a Fly Fishing Merit Badge in the Girl Scouts, and we need someone with an inside track on how Girl Scout's work. Please contact Susan if you can help: davidhalblom-bugtyer@worldnet.att.net.

MISSOURI SAND AND GRAVEL MINING CONSERVATION ISSUES!

**By Brian Ellis
VP Communications**

There is an urgent conservation issue in Missouri and it's important that all Federation clubs in Missouri rally their members to get involved in this issue as soon as possible. Any out of state assistance would also be greatly appreciated.

Since the mid 90's the Army Corps of Engineers regulated sand and gravel mining in Missouri, then the American Mining Congress sued for a ruling that the Army Corps of Engineers had no authority in this matter... and won. Authority passed back to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources which held public meetings in early 2002 to propose a set of rules. The meetings were dominated by gravel mining interests that pushed for relaxing the rules. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources then established a workgroup composed of both mining and conservation interests to develop rules for gravel mining in Missouri. Ozark Fly Fishers is actively participating on this workgroup and I urge other FFF affiliated Missouri clubs and conservation organizations to also get involved to ensure that the Missouri Department of Natural Resources develops enforceable rules instead of unenforceable guide- lines that the mining industry wants.

Even more disturbing, Senators Steelman, Klindt, Cauthorn, Russel and Griesheimer have introduced State Senate Bill No.360, which would repeal current regulations and replace it by regulations covering only those operators which mine greater than five thousand tons annually. Thus if this bill passed, 74% (109 of 146) of the current permit operators would be exempt from any proposed regulations. The passage of this bill would be absolutely devastating for Missouri streams.

Ozark Fly Fishers has initiated an aggressive letter writing campaign to address these issues. To find how you can help and to keep informed of these important issues, please visit the Ozark Fly Fishers web site <<http://ozarkflyfishers.org>>. I also posted a notice of this issue on the FFF Southern Council web site.

Thank you for your attention with this important matter! Please pass this information on to all interested parties!

Brian Ellis can be reached at (314) 822-1819, or e-mail brian.j.ellis@boeing.com

CONSERVATION

**By Bob Tabbert
VP Conservation**

At the December meeting, the Board approved funding for five conservation projects:

1. The fourth payment of \$3,000.00 to the Capps Creek trout project in Missouri. The original commitment for this 5-year project was made in 2000. The Capps Creek Trout Project is a cooperative effort with TU, and the Missouri Department of Conservation to fund the purchase of lands and the development of a public access at the Capps Creek trout fishery in Southwest Missouri.
2. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission will receive a grant of \$500.00 to help with the development of a youth and handicap fishery at CoIllins Creek on the Little Red River below Greers Ferry Dam near Heber Springs, Arkansas.
3. The Missouri Department of Conservation's Stream Team Project will receive a \$250.00 grant to help fund the continuation of their excellent water quality program.
4. The Heart of America Fly Fishers in Shawnee, Kansas will receive a \$500.00 grant to continue their Blue River Rescue Program.
5. A second grant of \$250.00 will go to the Heart of America Fly Fishers to help fund their Student Environment Learning Fair.

The total of \$4,500.00 to fund these five conservation projects came out of profits from the Southern Council's Conclave. In an attempt to develop an additional source of conservation monies the Board approved a conservation-educational fundraiser. Details and application are printed in this edition of the Long Casts.

There are over 4,000 fly fishers in the Southern Council watching over our fisheries. We all are conservationists and river watchers. The knowledge and application of our conservation practices to the waters in which we fish is the key to their preservation. At this basic level each one on us, as a river watcher, can have a positive effect on our fisheries. Before the December Board Meeting while wade fishing in the Norfolk, my fishing concentration was rudely interrupted when the water started to rise. I hurried to get out to the safety of the shore. As I approached the shore I picked up a tangle of snarled leader material caught on some branches. I stuffed the snarl into my vest, and noticed a scud was tied to the tippet. The tippet was still strong. The rest of the leader came apart in my hands. The tangle of monofilament leader would be a temporary hazardous snare for the fish. Monofilament does react to ultra violet light and will break down dissolving in the water. Fluorocarbon leaders or tippets are a different story. Fluorocarbon materials are impervious to ultra violet light; they will not break down in the water. The manufacturers of fluorocarbon lines, leaders or tippet materials have been slow to share this information with us. Fluorocarbon leaders, or lines, if accidentally dropped in the water, will remain in the water as permanent hazardous snares for the fish. Pack it out with you.

When you are out fishing and watching over our fisheries, if you see something that needs fixing, do it! If the problem requires club action take ti up with your club's Conservation Officer. If your club needs conservation funding to help fix the problem, contact me at rtab@msn.om or 1-337-989-0815. I will work with your club to obtain some conservation monies. Realistically, with the current economy, the days of a \$3000.00 conservation grant are probably over. We should be thinking in terms of requesting a lesser amount of conservation dollars, either matched by the requesting club with dollars or work, or cooperatively funded with other organizations or agencies. The profits from the past conclaves have been generously shared with our conservation requests. If we are to continue our conservation work in the Southern Council we need to develop some additional funding. Please take a careful look at our proposed conservation fund-raiser and consider making a donation. Every dollar will be spent in the Southern Council's waters. Thank you for your support, be careful wading, wear that wading belt, watch over our fisheries.

SOUTHERN COUNCIL'S CONSERVATION AND EDUCATIONAL FUND

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Address _____

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**30th ANNIVERSARY
SOUTHERN COUNCIL CONCLAVE
OCTOBER 3 - 4, 2003
MOUNTAIN HOME, ARKANSAS**

Preparations are well under way for the 2003 FFF Southern Council Conclave in Mountain Home, Arkansas. All committee chair persons have been selected and all are working hard to put together a very special 30th anniversary event. Featured speakers scheduled for the Friday and Saturday programs will be Jason and Gary Borger, in that order. Both of these gentlemen have attended our conclave in the past, but never together to my knowledge. If you don't know, Gary is Jason's father and if you attended the conclave last year you know that Jason did a great job filling in for Lefty Kreh, who took ill and could not attend. I can't think of a better twosome to highlight the entire weekend.

We are trying very hard to add variety to the speakers and programs offered in order to reach a larger number of attendees. There is an unbelievable number of talented speakers, fly tyers, presenters, and casters, in the Southern Council and we have received nothing but cooperation and positive support.

Also, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage anyone interested in becoming a "Certified Casting Instructor." There will be a number of qualified instructors available on both Friday and Saturday for both Master and Basic Certification. There will also be additional instructor courses on "How to teach" and how to "Prepare for basic certification".

If anyone is interested in helping with the conclave in any capacity, please make an effort to contact myself or one of the committee chair persons.

Here is a partial list for your information.

Conclave Chairman:	
Joe Butler	1-417-358.0274
Programs:	
Joe Butler/Teresa Van Winkle	1-417-358-0274
Auction Raffle Chairman:	
Jim Murphy	1-417-742-5102
Commercial Displays:	
Harvey Ragsdale	1-417-866-1194
Fly Tying:	
Steve Jensen	1-417-887-0205
Women's Outreach:	
Sheryl Knight	1-817-478-8930 .

SOC member clubs, please inform your individual members about the conclave. It is the biggest and best in the FFF and each SOC club should take advantage of the educational efforts being put forth by your fellow fly fishers. There are 46 member clubs in the Southern Council, more than enough for a better than ever conclave, providing each club has a fair number of attendees present. I challenge you to find any other conclave (or any other fly fishing show) where you can get so much education in one weekend for such a small price, not to mention the fun, fishing, food, etc.

Joe Butler, Conclave Chairman

HELLO FELLOW FLY FISHERS

I would like to take this time to introduce myself. My name is Jim Murphy, and I am the Auction/Raffle chairperson for the 2003 Southern Council Conclave. I am currently a member of several fly fishing clubs in Southwest Missouri, and will be representing the MAKO Fly Fishers at this year's conclave.

At this time, I would like to welcome you all to the 2003 Conclave, which will be the Southern Council's 30th Anniversary. Currently I have sent out approximately 400 letters to area businesses, manufacturers, guide services, and individuals asking for donations to raise funds required to continue our conservation and education programs. Slim Mitchell, of the Dallas Fly Fishers, is working on a club fly challenge for all 46 clubs, which will be one of our large raffle items with the chance of winning 1656 or more flies. Randy Hopkins, of the MAKO Fly Fishers, is working on the club fishing trip challenge, with each fishing destination to be auctioned off.

The main goal for the Conclave is to raise funds for conservation and education projects in the nine state region of the Southern Council. The conclave also provides the funds necessary to run the council for the next year including the printing of the Long Cast. Without the help of everyone, these projects can not be possible and some of our favorite fisheries could be destroyed. Lets all make a difference this year by participating in the 30th Anniversary Southern Council Conclave.

Thanks for your time and cooperation.

If you have any questions, ideas or would like to help, feel free to contact me at apriljimmurphy@aol.com or (417) 742-5102

SOUTHERN COUNCIL FLY TYING

The Southern Council Conclave has a rich tradition of showcasing some of the best fly tyers in the United States and this year the tradition will continue. In addition to the familiar council fly tying legends, I intend to seek and invite new emerging talent from around the council.

If you have never attended one of our conclaves and watched our fly tyers, your appreciation of the art of fly tying will be greatly enriched by the experience. Nowhere else will you find a finer group of men, women, and junior fly tiers willing to share their techniques and knowledge. They enjoy talking with the conclave attendees willingly demonstrate their talents to help make you a better tier. Pull up a chair, take notes or photographs, and learn from the masters.

We are proud that all of our demonstration tiers participating in the Southern Council Conclave are members in good standing of the Federation of Fly Fishers. As a group they support the ideals of that organization and the promotion of fly fishing for all fish in all waters.

On behalf of the 2003 conclave tiers, I thank you for your interest in fly tying and look forward to seeing you at the conclave.
by Steve Jensen
2003 Conclave Fly Tying chair

SHOCK-O-RAMA ON WINKLEY SHOALS

by Bill Brant
Asst. VP Communication

I was downloading e-mail messages one evening in January and saw one that looked particularly interesting. It was entitled "Shock-A-Rama on Winkley Shoals, Little Red River". The first part of the title almost made it look like it was a junk e-mail, but then seeing the word shoals and Little Red River changed my perception. The purpose was quickly explained in the e-mail: "On Saturday, February the 8th, we will again sample Winkley Shoals on the Little Red River. The purpose of the sample will be evaluation of the in-stream habitat work that was done last January. This seemed like something worthwhile to do for a weekend. I added, a mention on the Southern Council website (www.southerncouncilfff.org) and made plans to attend.

The first step was to figure out exactly where Winkley Shoals is located. Several years ago the Mid-South Fly Fishers published a book titled *Home Waters*. It had a description of the Little Red and also had a very useful map that showed the public access locations, including Winkley Shoals.

The weekend started with a drive to Heber Springs, a town conveniently located near Greer's Ferry dam. The cold water released from the bottom of the dam creates a wonderful trout fishery in the river downstream from the dam.

Saturday morning it was cold, really cold. However, it was supposed to get warmer as the day progressed. I drove from the hotel in Heber Springs to the access at Winkley Shoals. It only took a few minutes. Several people were fishing upstream of the shoals. Participants for the survey were just starting to show up and were assembling in the parking lot. Many different groups were represented. There were people from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. There were students and others affiliated with the University of Arkansas, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, and the Arkansas Technical University. There were also people from several different FFF clubs. I talked to the FFF'ers from Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas. There were others with no particular affiliation, they were simply interested in the health of the river and its trout.

Eventually the crowd grew to 70 or 80 participants. Everyone was friendly, everyone was having a good time. You could pretty much walk up to anyone at the event and start a conversation. Also, it was particularly good to see all of those who were affiliated with the various universities. They represented a large contingency of young energetic persons who will hopefully take good care of the area trout streams in the future.

The first official function in the morning was a detailed safety discussion as well as an explanation of how we would be spending our morning. Thomas Bly, the District Fisheries Biologist, and Darrell Bowman, the Arkansas Trout Biologist, addressed the crowd. They pointed out the hazards associated with an electroshocking survey. They identified some procedures we could use to minimize the chance of any problems or accidents. A commitment to safety didn't seem like such a bad idea. We had a large collection of volunteers wading in a cold river, along with a few who were carrying equipment that generates electricity.

The basic idea is that we would split up into teams. Each team would consist of one shocker, 3 netters and one bucket person. The shocker runs the equipment that produces the electricity that temporarily stuns the fish. The netters follow behind the shocker, netting any stunned fish. Those with buckets would receive the fish from the netters and carry the fish to the holding pens. Fish could then be pulled out of the pens, one-at-a-time, their length measured, their species identified, and then released.

The next step was to assign tasks. Ten people would run the shocking equipment. The people who brought the equipment would be the ones to run the equipment, not untrained volunteers. Those shockers lined up in a row in the parking lot. Anyone who wanted to be a netter, grabbed a net and then lined up behind a shocker. The process reminded me of picking teams in a school gym class. Next, a bucket person was assigned to each team. Finally, several individuals were identified to work the pens.

Now it was time to head down to the river. Fortunately it was much warmer now than when I arrived. It was actually fairly pleasant. A large net was strung across the river on the upstream side of the shoal, running from bank to bank. This net would act as a barrier and keep the fish from escaping the survey area.

All of the shockers, netters and bucket carriers went to the downstream side of the shoals. They lined up in their teams, across the entire width of the shoal. Holding pens were set up in the center of the shoal. The shockers turned on their equipment and made final adjustments. Everyone else waited in anticipation and finally we got the order to start.

Everyone started moving upstream in unison. Never having done this before, I expected to see fish immediately. That wasn't the case, no fish were netted in the first few feet of the survey. That makes sense, a river full of people would tend to scare fish upstream. Then we started seeing fish. You could see the excitement of each of the netters as they scooped up their first trout. Still not lot of fish, but at least some fish.

Everyone needed to keep in a straight line, perpendicular to the flow of the river. If not, there would be gaps that trout could use to escape downstream. Some teams got a little ahead of the pack, they needed to slow their speed. Other fell a little behind and needed to pick up the pace. Darrell Bowman had the task of herding us. He went back and forth across the river, instructing teams as needed. Everyone was doing their jobs well, shockers were shocking, netters were netting, and buckets of fish were getting carried to the holding pens.

As we approached the upstream barrier net we found lots of trout. These were fish that swam upstream ahead of us, as we waded up the shoal. Netters now had nets full of trout. Buckets and nets bulging with trout were being delivered to the holding pens.

Suddenly we were done. Equipment was shut down. Many of the participants circled the holding pens as the biologists identified the species of each trout, measured them, and released them.

Next we had something that kind of looked like a one-sided tug-of-war. Approximately 30 people lined up along the barrier net, shoulder-to-shoulder, pick up the net and pulled it out of the river.

Back in the parking lot, we were thanked for a job well done. The Arkansas Game and Fish provided a nice lunch, and they passed out caps and coffee cups. They also passed out laminated posters that showed illustrations of the different trout species found in Arkansas and provided some information on these fish.

Now there was time to talk. Both the FFF'ers and biologists unselfishly shared some of their secrets about fishing the river and I took mental notes.

When Arkansas Game and Fish added the habitat last year, they did a particularly good job. While wading, nothing looked artificial. It all looked natural and I had to ask to find which habitat was new. It ended up that quite a lot was added.

We surveyed lots of trout. based on their presence, the trout voted on how they felt about the habitat.

ADD A PENCIL TO YOUR VEST

by Judy Boston

Mid-South Fly Fishers Conservation Director

You have an opportunity to assist the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission (AGFC) trout biologists gather important data over time concerning the effectiveness of catch-&-release (C&R) areas on Arkansas trout waters. The AGFC trout biologists in the **AGFC Trout Program**, headed by **Darrell Bowman**, have begun new tagging studies in the Arkansas tailwaters (the part of a river below a dam) for all the C&R areas. The information below will tell you what to do if you catch a trout with what looks like a piece of colored spaghetti attached to its back at the base of its dorsal fin. The tag may or may not have a coating of algae growth. **Hint: Do not remove the tag** from trout you release but **do call** the Trout Program with information from all tagged trout you catch.

Background

From time-to-time electro fishing sampling is done in an area to provide a "snap-shot" view of the trout population at the time of the sample. This type of sampling was done in February at Winkley Shoals (Little Red River) in order to compare data (size, diversity, and abundance) before and after the habitat restoration there. While this data is valuable, and especially so when there is a variable factor — such as habitat restoration—"snap-shot" types of electro fishing sampling do not always tell the biologists why the trout populations look the way they do at the time.

Fish tagging studies are a better way for the biologists to understand the dynamics of trout populations. Tagging studies to gather data on trout growth rates, mortality rates, trout migration, and angler exploitation rates will shed a better light on the trout populations and how regulations affect them. Tagging studies require more effort on the part of AGFC personnel because individual trout within the trout population at the time of tagging are being tracked rather than a nebulous and changing picture of an area's trout population.

An analogy of the differences in "snap-shot" electro fishing sampling versus ongoing tagging studies would be the differences in assessing a school's senior class population at yearly intervals versus assessing one year's senior class population and then determining what happened to each individual student throughout the year and in

subsequent years. Both give useful information, but determining the fate of individuals within a population over time gives a different set of information than simply the makeup of a changing population at the same location.

Tagging

AGFC personnel use nighttime electro fishing to catch, identify the species, measure to the nearest millimeter, weigh to the nearest gram, tag, and release 1,000 trout from each C&R area. The tags used in this study are **colored (tan, yellow, orange, etc.) spaghetti type tags about 1.5 or 2-inches long** and are inserted into the trout's back **just below the dorsal fin**. The tags each have an individual tracking number as well as the phone number of the Trout Program office. Once all the C&R areas each have their 1,000 trout tagged, AGFC can periodically recapture them to record the ongoing species/length/weight data and then re-release the tagged trout. Anglers can report where and when these trout are caught. Over time, meaningful growth rates, migration and mortality rates can be determined for these tagged trout because each trout will have an individual number.

During the last quarter of 2002, tagging was completed for 1,000 trout from the Beaver Tailwater, 1,000 trout from the Dunham/Mossy Shoals (Little Red River), and 1,000 trout from the Sylamore (White River) C&R areas. Work was suspended during the spawn to avoid any negative impacts to spawning trout. However, this spring tagging work will resume on the Bull Shoals Tailwater (White River) for the Bull Shoals, Rim Shoals, and Monkey Island (downstream from Red's Landing) C&R areas, as well as the Norfolk Tailwaters C&R area. Additionally, and in order to collect initial baseline information, trout tagging will be done in the Spring River between Dam 3 downstream to Bayou Access (not currently a C&R area).

TAG—"You're It"—What to Do

The AGFC Trout Program's Trout Biologist, **Darrell Bowman**, and his assistant trout biologists, **Stan Todd** and **Jeff Williams**, ask that you assist as anglers by treating any tagged trout you catch the same way you would treat any other trout you catch, within AGFC regulations for trout. It is expected that most of the tagged trout will be caught and then released in the C&R areas. However, some to many trout will migrate out of the C&R areas and then may be either harvested or released. The tags will appear as if a colored piece of spaghetti (tan, yellow, orange, etc.) is coming from the base of the dorsal fin on top of the trout's back and may or may not be covered in algae.

Please do not remove the tag from a released trout. If you catch a tagged trout in a C&R area, release the trout with the tag in place. If you catch a tagged trout outside a C&R area, leave the tag in place if you release it. **Never cut the tag off a released trout**. However, if possible, write down the tag's tracking number and the Trout Program's phone number to call. It is OK to keep (harvest) a tagged trout if done within the context of fishing regulations (*i.e.* from unregulated water within the creel limits).

Then at your convenience, please call the phone number on the tag to report the **tag number**, **when** you caught it, **where** you caught it, and whether it was **kept or released**. You may also be asked to report what it was caught on as that is interesting info but not necessarily a part of the study.

It is better to release a tagged trout without reporting the information than to cut the tag off just to retain the tag's number to report. **Again, please do not remove the tag from a trout you release.** Just carry a pencil and paper to record tag information.

This is not a "reward" program. There is no bounty placed on the tags. The only reward you will receive is the knowledge that you are a responsible angler helping the AGFC Trout Program. The data from the tagging studies will provide the Trout Program information to evaluate the effectiveness of C&R areas in providing increased catch rates and/or larger trout.

Summary

Add a pencil and paper to your fishing gear.

Record the tag's tracking number if you catch a tagged trout.

Leave the tag in a released trout.

If you keep a trout (outside the C&R areas and within the regulations, of course), retain the tag's information.

Call the Trout Program (phone number on the tag) to report:

- **Tracking number** of the tag
- **Date** the trout was caught
- **Where** caught
- **Whether released or kept**
- (Optional) What caught it—fly, jig, spinner, etc.

Spread the word - DON'T REMOVE THE TAG; REPORT THE INFO.

CLOUSER POWER

By Corey Rich

Until a couple of years ago, I had little use for Clousers. The majority of my fishing was on foot in water that almost never wet my knees, often in thick grass. The last thing I needed was a fast sinker.

As those knees and other parts have gotten older, though, I've found myself fishing from the boat more often. From the boat there's usually less time to get the fly in front of the fish, the water is deeper, and it has to get down quickly. That's what Clouser power is all about

The Clouser Deep Minnow was originally developed by Bob Clouser of Pennsylvania to fish for smallmouth bass in clear, flowing water. His design was tied very sparsely so it would sink quickly in the current

Now Clousers are tied in a variety of sizes, colors, and dressings to catch just about anything that swims in fresh water or salt. But they still work best when tied sparsely.

Joe DeForke and Norbert Burch are two of the Texas Flyfishers' best redfishers and they fish mostly from the boat. While they don't use Clousers exclusively, it's what they start the day with and, often, it's what they end the day with. When the pair fish together, they start with different colored Clousers, one with chartreuse over white, the other with olive over white, until they determine what the fish like or don't like. If one of those color combinations gets refused more than once, off it goes and another combination gets tied on until they find out what the reds are eating that day.

Joe and Norbert will switch to orange over white, red over white, red over yellow, and all black if the starting lineup needs to be replaced.

Usually something will work. If not, they'll switch to another pattern entirely, generally a seaducer. Some days the fish just don't eat, no matter what you throw at them.

As for size, Joe and Norbert usually use a size 4. So do Tira Jane and I when we're fishing for reds. Redfish eat small things, unlike speckled trout, which like a huge meal followed by a couple of days of rest.

A couple of years ago Tira discovered that winter redfish over light sand will eat a black Clouser when nothing else will tempt them. This is shallow water wading, and the fly is scooting along the bottom, not swimming and jigging through the water column. This defies (or maybe proves) conventional wisdom. All my life I've heard that the fly should match the surroundings in color and shade, because prey has adapted so as not to stand out and be obvious to predators. A contrasting bait is not "natural". If you think about it, though, the reason bait has adapted is because those that stand out are quickly eaten.

Tira has another theory: Under light sand in many places is a layer of dark sand or mud. Worms and burrowing animals probably take on the dark color of the level they inhabit. A black Clouser may look like a worm from down in the mud that has made a mistake and come to the surface.

During the weekend in February we found reds and black drum over light sand. They ate chartreuse Clousers for a while, then turned off. We switched to black Clousers and they started eating again. One of the black drum regurgitated a wad of polychaete worms that were dark in color.

Our favorite fly for bonefish in the Bahamas is Jim McVay's Gotcha, a tasty looking morsel that may pass for a shrimp or crab. But I have had pretty good luck with a tan Clouser in size 4 or 6 when the bones are a little deeper. A chartreuse Clouser there is great for small barracuda. It also attracts pesky little schoolmaster fish that always seem to grab the fly just as you pick it up to cast to a bonefish.

Recently, to my surprise, I caught two big sheepshead at the jetties on a size 2 long-winged Clouser in red with a lot of very shiny holographic Flashabou. The fly also took speckled trout, which were my target.

Lefty Kreh has described his Lefty's deceiver as a style of tying rather than a pattern. That's a pretty apt description of the Clouser Deep Minnow, too. You can use a variety of natural and synthetic materials in all colors of the rainbow and vary the size and weight to fit the situation.

On a Bahamas bonefishing trip a couple of years ago we had the good fortune to be at the same lodge as Lefty for a week. He showed me how he frequently ties Clousers. It's a simplification of the already simple pattern, and it helps keep the fly sparse;. He doesn't put any material at all on the side of the hook opposite the hook point, only the eyes. On the side with the hook point he ties the wing ahead of the eyes, but not lashed behind them. That's it. I've tied and fished them like that ever since, and they work fine, maybe better than the original design. The nice thing is, you can tie about a dozen of them in an hour. Thanks to the Texas Flyfishers for providing this article.

GOING NATIVE

By Duane Hada

As a youngster I was always in a creek. Growing up as an Ozark kid in rural Boone and Newton counties of North Arkansas, I was blessed with seemingly unlimited opportunities to fish and play in native creeks. I have rich memories of riding my bike or my old horse, Babe, down the dirt roads and old logging trails that lead from my house to an enchanted land (before the parks) of deep hollows, limestone bluffs and jade pools.

It was in one of those jade pools that I first encountered a fish that has held a special place in my angling heart throughout my life, the wild and native smallmouth bass – “brownies” as I learned to call them. I had captured many fish and critters already in my handful of years, but I now realize that none have made a more lasting impression on me than this unique native fish. Looking back, I can see myself as a skinny little kid in cut-offs standing knee-deep in that pool holding a fish as long in inches as I was in age. I can still recall the beautiful pool with moss-draped ledges and dark pockets below sunken boulders. The chase and visual strike of the mottled bronze in the clear waters created a permanent etching into my seven-year-old mind. In my mental video I can go back and feel the gravel between my toes, smell the cool dampness and see the splashes of redbuds and dogwoods while being awe-struck at how tenacious and spirited this creek bass fought. I was hooked and I know I always will be.

Through my professional guiding today in the Ozarks is taken up mostly with the popularity of the tailwaters and their trout, you will see my pulse quicken and speech get a little excited when someone asks about a smallmouth trip. Smallmouth fishing is experiencing the true wild Ozarks to the fullest.

There are many places to experience a quality quest for microperus dolomieu in our region, and I have put fishing all of them high on my list. Looking at a map of the Southern Council Region, it seems that most, if not all readers, are closer in proximity to a good smallmouth location than the popular trout destinations. Although you can have a quality smallmouth trip on many of the popular float streams throughout our region, I really enjoy hiking into small remote headwater creeks. Many of these streams are on public land in state or national forest lands. Years ago during my college days, I spent one of my breaks with my brother hiking and fishing the entire length of Falling Water and Richland Creek to where it empties into the Buffalo. We followed the creek, hiked, camped and fished four days in some of the most remote wilderness that the Ozarks has to offer. We did not see another human during our trek, and I still consider it one of the great trips of my life. What better place for brotherhood than a remote smallmouth stream? Though the true wild places are shrinking, it is still possible to have this type of experience if you are willing to put forth the effort. If the survival game is not for you, you can still experience some quality smallmouth fishing close to home.

I recommend the following areas for stream smallmouth:

Southeast Oklahoma - Mountain Fork, Little River, Glover, Eagle Fork
Northeast Oklahoma - Illinois, Barron Fork, Flint Creek

Northwest Arkansas - Kings, Osage, Mulberry, Lee Creek, Upper White River
Central Arkansas - Buffalo, Crooked Creek, Bear Creek, Sylamore, Little Buffalo, Piney, Long Creek, Middle Fork of the Little Red
Northeast Arkansas - Eleven Point, Strawberry, Spring, Myatt Creek

These are just a few that I can mention without getting you or myself into any trouble. Tennessee and Missouri are also blessed with an abundance of free-flowing smallmouth streams. I've fished a few of them and I plan to fish more (so much water, so little time). Some states publish either float stream guides or detailed county by county maps that can put you on smallmouth waters.

Concerning gear for smallmouth trips, keep it mobile and simple. I usually wet-wade with felt-soled boots, or better yet, some of the new hiking/wading crossover boots that grip the slick rocks yet provide ankle support. A small fanny pack, or sometimes just a couple of boxes that fit in your shirt pockets, will get you through the day. A couple of leaders, a spool or two of tippet, maybe some floatant, and you are pretty well set for the day.

You generally do not need a lot of flies. I tend to concentrate on the most common food forms available for the stream at the time of year I'm fishing. Minnows and crawfish are usually the order of the day. Mix in a few large nymphs and some rubber legged hoppers and you should be catching smallmouth just about anywhere!

If you asked to see my guide box it would contain the following:

Floating marabou muddler, size 4
Pearl and natural zonker, size 4
Clouser minnows, size 6 -size 2
Lead-eyed near nuff crawfish, size 4
Lead-eyed black hare worm, size 2
Rootbear rubber-legged gitzit, size 4
Small hard body pencil popper, size 6
Chartreuse Sneaky Pete, size 6
Dave's Bass Hopper, size 6
Weighted Woolybuggers and rubber-legged nymphs, size 8

As a general rule, for clear streams I keep my flies slim and trim. As in nature, if a fly camouflages with the stream bottom, I know I have a good choice. For minnows you need to cover the column top to bottom, natural colored floating marabou muddler style minnows, a zonker for mid-zones and a clouser for jigging off the bottom. Concerning crawfish patterns, I tend to tie mine on the heavy side, hook-up style. A crawfish fly must fish like a crawfish to be effective. It is crucial that it keep contact with the bottom throughout the retrieve. Another one of my bottom-bouncing flies imitates a madtom, those little miniature catfish that oversize smallies relish. A simple lead-eyed hareworm works well, but again, keep it on the bottom. Round this out with a few top-waters like the Sneaky Pete, pencil popper, bass popper, and you are pretty well complete.

For rod selection, a mid-flexing 8-1/2 ft for a 6 wt. is my choice. I feel the shorter rod and mid-flex is more accurate for putting flies tight into cover, and a 6 wt. line will handle the weight of most of the flies. I prefer a lighter and smaller rod for tiny headwater creeks that are narrow and canopied. I have some favorite little no-name haven close to the house that I fish with a 7-1/2 ft 3 wt. The largest native bass I expect to catch out of these feeder springs might be a ten-incher, but man what a fight! A weight-

forward or bass-bug taper floating line will be most useful on a year-round basis in most streams. I have found that a fast sinking 5-ft. sink-tip can really make the difference in keeping bottom contact on larger swift rivers when fishing crawfish patterns. This bottom bouncing technique is so effective, especially in early spring when the streams are settling down and the bass just starting to warm up and feed. Most often I use 3X 9ft leaders and 3X tippet I have not felt the need to go lighter, these fish do not exhibit the scrutinizing that spring creek trout do when examining a fly. 3X allows the abrasion resistance and breaking strength, yet it does not rob the fly of needed action.

Fly fishing for wild native smallmouth gives you the fullest of the Ozark stream fishing experience. These fish and their world are unique and special. Once you decide to enter their world and pursue them, I hope you will develop a passion for them. They need friends. The more you learn about them the more you will want to become active for them and be their voice. Tragically, as humans continue to greedily destroy their habitat and change their Ozark landscape, the native smallmouth will all too soon become only a symbol of the few pure uncomplicated things left in this world.

Hiking to a creek through an old farmstead where quail calls were once common, I am slowed to a rhythmic pace that connects me to pools and thoughts extant from my boyhood haunts. As I cast into familiar jade pools I pray that those same generation of native bass will be there as long as this earth lasts.

Smallmouth Facts:

Average growth rates *It takes six years to grow to a 12-inch fish

Smallmouth fry come off the nest coal black in color and have the highest rate of predation of the bass fry.

Wild smallmouth in Ozarks streams may live in excess of 16 years but seldom reach 21 inches in length.

Heavy fishing pressure, even catch and release, on nest sites can totally eliminate the successful spawn of that season.

Smallmouth have the ability to chameleon or change pattern and color to match surroundings. The same fish can range from solid black to a light golden brown broken camo in a matter of minutes. Fingerling smallmouth display a bright orange band on their tails for the first year of their lives.

IN THE MARKET



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WINDMILL LAKE

**By Kelly C. Warren,
 Fort Worth Fly Fishers**

Windmill Lake, a 30-acre lake located on the L.B.J. National Grasslands in Decatur, Texas, was recently designated as a fly fishing only site. The lake is now the only publicly-owned body of water in the state that is reserved for fly fishing. Fish stocked in the lake includes bluegill, perch, and bass.

The opening of Windmill Lake in the result of a nine-year project jointly sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the Fort Worth Fly Fishers Club. In 1993, the Forest Service, in response to the Fort Worth Fly Fishers offer to assist with conservation projects on the Grasslands, suggested the construction of a fly fishing only lake. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department worked with the Forest Service to develop a management plan for the proposed lake, and the Fort Worth Fly Fishers helped plan, build, and secure habitat structures that were placed in the lake bed before the site was flooded. Additional work was completed with the assistance of Fort Worth Fly Fishers at Windmill Lake, and at other lakes on the Grasslands property, including the construction of a handicapped-accessible fishing pier on Clear Lake. Some of the funding of the project came from the Southern Council grant awarded in 1996. Matching funds were provided by the National Forest Foundation, and Fort Worth Fly Fishers members contributed in-kind gifts of materials and labor.

Although the lake received stockings over the last nine years, a serious setback occurred during a drought. The lake has since recovered and has been stocked again, and is now open for fishing. Recent surveys confirm a healthy prey base and significant bass population in the lake.

Regulations for the lake specify single, barbless or crimped-barb hooks, require a fly at the terminal end of the fishing line, and restrict bass fishing to catch-and-release only. Motorized boats are prohibited. All species other than bass can be kept. When the lake was first proposed, the plan was to use the lake as a "living laboratory". It is expected that the lake will receive heavy fishing pressure, and it is hoped that, as the lake "grows", information gathered via creel surveys, fish sampling, and similar activities will assist personnel in developing management techniques that will result in the development of a quality bass fishery at Windmill Lake. Other Forest Service lakes are expected to benefit from the data gathered at Windmill. It is hoped that any management techniques developed during the evolution of the lake can be used to improve the quality of other Forest Service fisheries.

Securing the fly fishing only designation for the lake did not occur without controversy. Although the original Management Plan called for the lake, when opened, to be designated as a fly fishing only site, there was some difficulty in getting the Forest Supervisor's Prohibition Order signed. The supervisor stated that he did not have the authority to designate "methods of take" for a lake, and advised The Fort Worth Fly Fishers to pursue a regulation change through the Texas Parks and Wildlife. The Supervisor's contention was that continued on page 12 "Windmill Lake"

**WAYNE AND CATHERINE MOORE
YOUTH FUND
APPLICATION FOR SUPPORT**

REQUIREMENTS:

The stipulated purpose of the Southern Council's Wayne and Catherine Moore youth fund is to provide activities. Specifically, the fund provides money for the purchase of food items (such as hot dogs, hamburgers, soda pop, etc.) when such food items are consumed in conjunction with a sponsored youth activity conducted by a recognized club of the Southern Council, Federation of Fly Fishers. The fund is not to be used for travel expenses or purchase of equipment and/or materials. It is expected that clubs requesting funding will be frugal with their requests.

As a requirement of successful funding, the sponsoring club is to formally designate their activity a "Wayne and Catherine Moore Youth Activity" and to spend a moment telling the youth about the Moores. Essentially, the Moores were dedicated supporters of the Federation of Fly Fishers and the Southern Council. Originally from Wisconsin, they retired to Mountain Home in the 1970's where they became very active in fly tying and fly fishing. Wayne Moore passed away suddenly in 1984 and it was Catherine's bequest that established the youth fund. Catherine had always maintained a very strong interest in youth activities. Catherine ultimately moved to Washington State where she passed away in 1995.

Upon completion of the activity, the sponsoring club is to send a brief summary of the event including number of participants and what activities were held.

Name of sponsoring organization (must be in good standing with the Southern Council): _____

Date of the proposed activity (please allow at least 30 days for processing): _____

Brief statement on the nature of the proposed activity or event:

Number and age group of youth expected to participate: _____

Total amount requested: \$ _____

Return the completed application to:

Steve Jensen
4515 West Coach Drive
Battlefield, MO 65619-9711

Approved: _____ S. Jensen _____ S. Smith Check mailed _____

continued from page 11 "Windmill Lake"
state regulations would apply to the lake, that fly fishing is a separate method of take, and that a fly fishing only designation would violate state fishing laws. Texas Parks and Wildlife, in response, maintained that the Forest Service would need to issue a Supervisor's Prohibition Order to secure the fly fishing only designation, specified in the original Management Plan developed by both agencies. Over a period of several months, Fort Worth Fly Fishers Conservation Officer Kelly Warren negotiated with both agencies regarding the impasse. Once it was established that Texas Parks and Wildlife does not consider fly fishing to be a method of take separate from other pole-and-line fishing, the Forest Service had a clear path to proceed with the Prohibition Order. That Order was signed on January 31, 2003. The official lake opening event is scheduled for April 5, 2003. Fort Worth Fly Fishers' members will be on hand to teach those in attendance fly-casting and fly-fishing.

It is important to note that Windmill Lake is a work-in-progress. As the lake- and the fish - continue to grow, regulations may be changed. Biologists involved with the project predict the need for selective harvest of bass in the future to allow the remaining fish to grow into the trophy-sized fish we all dream of landing.

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THE RITES OF SPRING

By Brian Camp
Fort Worth Fly Fishers

Spring is such a special time of the year. The trees begin to bud out, songbirds we haven't seen and heard in a while are back and the flowers unleash their magnificent dazzling bloom. Warmer temperatures and longer days also affect you and I in some powerful and unusual ways, prompting a flood of hormones into our bloodstream. Romance is definitely in the air and as we shuck off our heavy, stifling winter garb and change to the light, flimsy fabrics our fancy soon turns to, you know, bass fishing.

So what are you gonna' do about it? I know you grizzled veterans out there have been busy all winter, tying perfect bugs, knotting leaders, re-wrapping that favorite rod. But what about the rest of you? Are you ready? After all, there is no more singularly important event that demands such precise and complete preparation than the Spring bass season, except maybe for Aunt Edna's annual Karaoke and Chile Eatin' Festival down at MaMa Mia's BBQ Seaweed and Metric Conversion Emporium. And I don't want to hear you hunters whine about how much work it is getting ready for the dear and duck seasons either. You grab a bag of corn and a couple of decoys and you're set - big deal. We're talking serious hand-to-hand combat stuff here and hunters are sissies compared to the real bass fishermen I have known.

OK, I tell you what I'll do. For all of you lazes out there that whiled away your useful time this winter in quest of deer, ducks, and goodness knows what else, I'm gonna' give you a break and help you out with some invaluable words of advice in this column so at least you stand a slim chance of reclaiming your honor and being able to hold your head up in semi-pride when you find yourself amongst some real fly fishers. First thing you do, and do it right now, is hit the vise. Of course, the serious bass fisherman cleaned some the shops out of all the good tying materials several months ago so you'll have to work with the dregs they left behind. But that's the price you gotta pay for being lazy and sitting on your butt in a frozen swamp with a rusting shotgun and a wet dog all winter.

Tie up 3 or 4 dozen deer hair diver type flies from #2 up to #2/0. Make about half of them all chartreuse with rest split up with blue/chartreuse, blue/yellow and red/white combinations. Throw in a few all black for using at sunset and a few in all white 'cause they work. Put some flash in all of them but don't overdo it as Springtime bass often want slow and quiet as opposed to fast and flashy. One particular color combo that I really like is my rainy-day pattern of all blue (both head and tail) with a little chartreuse on the belly. If you fish in the Spring, you will get rained on, if not snowed on, sleeted on and hailed on and there's something about this color combo that seems to draw strikes on cold, dark, overcast and, in other words, thoroughly nasty days. You duck hunters will still find these conditions a few notches below nominal but you'll just have to make do.

Minnows and sunfish are the predominant forage this time of year, discounting the odd baby duck, muskrat, nutria, etc., so tie up a few dozen streamers too. Clousers will work just fine though something that's of neutral buoyancy and pushes more water like a Sea Ducer is also nice to have. The Sea Ducers just need to be all chartreuse or all gray. The Clousers can be chartreuse over white, grey over white, brown over white and red over white. They're all good.

Size of the streamer, well that's a matter of considerable debate. There are those that will tell you that an old, potbellied lunger is real hungry after a long winter of fasting and that they want a big meal. It may just be strange coincidence, but I've observed that folks in this school are usually a little potbellied themselves and prefer their meals in pretty large chunks too. These folks will take a 1/0 or 2/0 streamer 8" to 10" long and wear out the water with it. However you see it though, they usually catch fish, often some pretty impressive ones. On the other hand, there is another school that says that minnows, like the bass, are spawning in the Spring and that as Spring progresses, the young-of-the-year fry are more prevalent, and therefore more available as food, than the adults. So to "match the hatch" as it is, you need much smaller flies. Personally, I'll Use 3" to 4" long brown over white Clousers tied #4 saltwater hooks about 70% of the time and I seem to catch bass pretty consistently from early Spring into the Summer. The other 30% of my time casting streamers is spent slow twitching medium sized, 6" to 8" Sea Ducers over, around and through the flooded brush. And yes, I do tie substantial weed guards on my overdressed, un-weighted Ducers.

I'm not going to bore you with tackle and please don't worry because so-and-so said you have to use a whatever brand fly rod in whatever length and whatever weight to be a real bass fisherman. Use what you've got and have fun. Just make sure that the rod's heavy enough to lob your fly 30 or 40 feet, with accuracy, into the wind and rain. If you're newly infected with the madness, don't have a favorite bass rod yet but planning to buy one, take the flies you're gonna' use down to the tackle shop and cast them. You'll find a model with a "sweet spot" just right for your casting stroke. Be aware; though, that the major manufacturers have not been making many left-handed models over the last couple of years because of the slowing economy so all you aspiring Lefty's . may have to make do with a right handed fly rod this year, Sorry.

Leaders naturally need to be stiff in order to turn the big flies over and constructed of heavy gauge mono too 'cause you're throwing them into the nastiest cover you can find in the lake. Twenty-pound test is a good average tippet strength through I'm sure that you'll come up with some situations that will dictate something a bit daintier.

As to where to find fish, well, whole books have been written on that subject and there isn't enough space in this modest rag to go into that sort of detail. How's that for a cop out! OK, I don't want to leave you high and dry, standing there with your rod in your hand with no place to go, so let me tell you this. Find a good topo map of your favorite lake and identify a handful of 2' to 4" deep flats that are in coves and adjacent to deeper creek channels. The flats on the north shore are always better because they receive more direct sunlight and warm faster. The more woody cover (lay downs, stick ups, flooded bushes, etc.) there is on the flat, the better. And fish SLOW! Early fish are often lethargic and won't usually chase something very far. Hit every piece of cover from every conceivable angle and make multiple casts to each target. Don't spend a lot of time in weedy areas as the plants are dead, stinky and doing a whole lot to be attractive to the fish this time of year. Save these areas for early Summer when the emergent vegetation really takes off on some serious growth spurts. Bottom line to finding Spring bass is to spend lotsa' hours on the lakes being content in knowing that most of your time will be spent in not catching fish. When you think about it though, won't you be a whole lot happier in not catching

fish while on a lake somewhere than not catching fish while doing something like painting the house or mowing the lawn. I know I am. Through sheer persistence, you will occasionally fool something and if you'll take a moment to analyze that spot and then remember where it is, in time you'll have a bunch of honey holes that will all consistently produce. And, naturally, you will have learned about these yourself, not from someone else or a book, which makes these the best fishing holes there are 'cause they're yours.


This should get you off to a pretty good start in landing a good one this year. As for me, well, I guess I'd better go get the duck decoys out of the back of the truck, seeing how duck season has been closed for about a month and a half now, and make some room for a kick boat. Guess I should probably tie some flies too. But first, I'm gonna' head down to Mama Mia's 'cause it's "Cajun" Surf and Turf night. Nothin' like a big helpin' of Mama' fine, spicy gar and nutria for inspiration to tie up a new batch of bass bugs!

Good Fly Fishing!

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MARABOU BLOODWORM

By Terry Tanner
 Southwest Missouri Fly Fishers

Fig. #1



Fig. #2



Fig. #3



MARABOU BLOODWORM TYING INSTRUCTIONS

- Fig. #1 Place a size 16 or 18 hook in your vise. Secure marabou tail, 3/0 thread and floss.
- Fig. #2 Wrap the floss up and down the hook shank for the body, and rib the body with the 310 flymaster thread..
- Fig. #3 Attach one strand of peacock herl to form the head to complete the fly. Add head cement of your choice.

Terry says using red thread and floss makes it one of the most productive colors for the fly.

Fishing Method

Some chironomid midges contain hemoglobin which gives them a red color. They live on the bottom of the water column. Fish the fly slow (extremely slow) while quivering the rod tip. This will cause the marabou tail to undulate like the natural.

Good Fishin'
 Terry Tanner

THINGS ARE LOOKING UP FOR THE GUADALUPE RIVER

By Kevin Stubbs

The Guadalupe River begins its journey to the Gulf of Mexico in west central Texas near Hunt. Its origin is born in the highly porous limestone that was deposited in the Cretaceous period approximately 600 million years ago. The period gives fossil evidence in the display of marine life from ancient beaches when sea levels were much higher. The sub surface terrain contains numerous caverns and passageways carved through the strata with the actions of slightly acetic rainwater permeating over the eons. This structure gives rise to the upper aquifer called "The Edwards.

Clear flowing springs of the Edwards Aquifer feed the upper and lower sections of the Guadalupe River. The upper river is above Canyon Lake and contains a warm water fishery for smallmouth, largemouth, native Guadalupe Bass and numerous perch species. The lower is below Canyon Dam that was erected to provide flood control downstream communities of New Braunfels, Seguin, Gonzalez Cuero. The lower section is a tailwater fishery emerging from of Canyon Dam with 50 degree water temperatures, even in the degree plus Texas heat. This is the southernmost trout fishery America.

The trout fishery was created with cooperative efforts from The Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept and local stream side landowners. A good portion of the stocked fish are 1-31bs. with many being quite a bit larger. Over the last few years "The Lower Guad" has gained national attention as a quality destination boasting Rainbows to seven pounds. The cold water conditions extend almost half of the 18 river miles from the dam to New Braunfels. The fish had adapted and spent many seasons thriving in the sub-tropical conditions.

July 4th week of 2002 marked a major event in the Central Tex including the Guadalupe River drainage. A low-pressure area c the Gulf of Mexico and produced rainfalls in excess of 24 inches in less than 10 days. This "Low" was trapped between two high-press areas, one to the east and one to the west. Comfort, Texas, near the headwaters of the Guadalupe received the lions share of the flooding rains. In a matter of days, the upper river had gone from 200 cu per second to almost 100,000 cubic feet per second.

Canyon Lake began to rise at an alarming rate. The Army Corps of Engineers, who built the dam, warned the marina's and lakefront homeowners of the impending flood. Downstream residents were warned that the emergency spillway, which had never been utilized in the lakes 40-year history, could flow with the fury of a 500 year flood. The worst case scenario was realized. The flow over the top of the dam's spillway raged at over 150,000 cubic feet per second. As the torrent blew through virgin oak and cedar forests, it gouged out a canyon over 150 feet wide and up to 80 feet deep. This canyon was created in a matter of days instead of 10,000 years. Boulders as big as a Suburban and trees up to 60 feet long roared toward streamside homes and businesses. The riverside homes and businesses downstream were devastated with floodwaters and debris.

The stocked trout in the lower river had survived several smaller floods, but this was no match for their adaptive skills. The water going over the top of the spillway approached 80-degree temperatures. The fisheries experts expected the worst. After the flooding subsided, the state's electro-fishing boats set out to substantiate claims that few trout were still being caught. Their surveys came up empty.

Through the course of the event, the river had undergone changes. Long, slow, deep pools have been replaced with gravel, which sped the flows in places. Tons of organic material had replaced barren runs beneath the surface. Many experts believe the Guadalupe has been changed for the better.

The clean-up crews contracted by FEMA have done a great job cleaning up the debris and the State of Texas have begun vigorous re-stocking efforts. Fisherman are hopeful once again and are returning in numbers to try their luck at the newly re-established trout fishery. Things are looking up for the Guadalupe River!



The Angling Art of Duane Hada

For information on this original and other prints, originals and fine art, please contact the artist at:

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FEDERATION OF FLY FISHERS CODE OF ANGLING ETHICS

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The mission of the Federation of Fly Fishers is to lead activities that enhance and support the fly fishing experience for all anglers who fish with the artificial fly: As part of our efforts to educate through fly fishing, we believe that ethical behavior is a key component of the angling experience. While the need to preserve for all anglers the natural beauty and quality of fisheries for future generations is paramount, consideration for fellow anglers cannot be overlooked.

FFF believes it essential that fly anglers in all waters embrace an ethic that embodies consideration for the environment and for others whether they are fishing or not. This Code of Angling Ethics complements the Catch and Release philosophy that is the hallmark of the Federation of Fly Fishers and reflects the importance of ethical behavior for all anglers. Moreover, it provides a framework for improving the angling experience by combining consideration of the fishery with respectful conduct towards fellow anglers. Overall, the policy denotes a journey in ethical behavior for fly anglers and not a destination.

Person-to-person and person-to-resource ethics go hand-in-hand. Fly anglers strive to understand and practice the land ethic of Aldo Leopold, which extends ethical consideration to the land, plants, animals, fish, and water that comprise the entire ecosystem. An important part of this land ethic is that fly anglers support those programs that sustain high species diversity, and do not support policies that could cause the premature extinction of another species. The Native Fish Policy of the Federation of Fly Fishers is based on this ethic of preventing fish species extinction.

The following nine behavior comprise the Federation of Fly Fishers' Code of Angling Ethics:

- Angling ethics begin with understanding and obeying laws and regulations associated with the fishery. Fly anglers understand that their conduct relative to laws and regulations reflects on all anglers. Angling ethics begin with and transcend laws and regulations governing angling and the resources that sustain the sport.
- The opportunity to participate in the sport of fly fishing is a privilege and a responsibility. Fly anglers respect private property and always ask permission before entering or fishing private property. They seek to understand and follow the local customs and practices associated with the fishery. They share the waters equally with others whether they are fishing or engaging in other outdoor activities.
- Fly fishers minimize their impact on the environment and fishery by adopting practices that do not degrade the quality of the banks, waters, and the overall watersheds upon which fisheries depend. These practices include avoiding the introduction of species not native to an ecosystem, and cleaning and drying fishing gear to prevent the inadvertent transport of invasive exotics that may threaten the integrity of an aquatic ecosystem. In simplest terms, fly anglers always leave the fishery better than when they found it.
- Fly anglers endeavor to conserve fisheries by understanding the importance of limiting their catch. "Catch and release" is an important component of sustaining premium fisheries that are being over-harvested. Fly anglers release fish properly and with minimal harm. They promote the use of barbless hooks and angling practices that are more challenging but which help to sustain healthy fish populations.
- Fly anglers do not judge the methods of fellow anglers. Fly fishers share their knowledge of skills and techniques. They help others to understand that fly-fishing contributes to sound fisheries conservation practices.
- Fly anglers treat fellow anglers as they would expect to be treated. They do not impose themselves on or otherwise interfere with other anglers. They wait a polite time, and then, if necessary, request permission to fish through. They may invite other anglers to fish through their positions. Fly fishers when entering an occupied run or area always move in behind other anglers, not in front of them whether in a boat or wading.
- Fly anglers when sharing the water allow fellow anglers ample room so as not to disturb anyone's fishing experience. They always fish in a manner that causes as little disturbance as practical to the water and fish. They take precautions to keep their shadow from falling across the water (walking a high bank).
- When fishing from watercraft fly anglers do not crowd other anglers or craft. They do not block entrances to bays or otherwise impede others. Fly anglers do not unnecessarily disturb the water by improperly lowering anchors or slapping the water with paddles or oars.
- Fly anglers always compliment other anglers and promote this Code of Angling Ethics to them whether they fish with a fly or not.