

April 2007

Contraband

Fly Casters

Tom Nixon Chapter

April Meeting: Tuesday April 17, 2007 at Prien Lake Park in Lake Charles, LA beginning at 6:00 pm, Casting Clinic featuring FFF certified casting instructors and dinner

Vice President's Message

Why a Vice President's message? Very simply because I haven't been able to connect with our president Ron Begnaud yet during what is Easter week and McNeese's spring break. The newsletter has to go out today, so I'm stepping up to the plate. Our April meeting will be a little different, starting at 6:00 pm at Prien Lake Park. We will have certified FFF casting instructors (once again from our friend at Acadiana Fly Rodders in Lafayette) available to help everyone with their stroke as we head into prime season for fly fishing in late spring. I know my casting is a bit rusty as I've been out fly fishing but once this spring, so I know exactly how rusty it is. Dinner will be served after the casting instruction. At the moment the menu isn't set, but dinner will be provided by our usual cooks Ron Begnaud and Danny Williams. No fried fish this time, since they want to prepare something ahead of time so they can participate in the casting instruction. There will also be soft drinks and dessert on hand. If you could RSVP to either contrabandflycasters@yahoo.com or 337/475-5956 it would be appreciated, so we can get an estimate of how many people plan to attend from the club it would be appreciated. If you fail to RSVP, it's not a big deal...just come with your favorite rods and enjoy the casting instruction.

That one outing was with Ron Foreman in late

March on the Calcasieu River. That was probably not a great choice as the river was very muddy from the rice farmers draining their fields. I managed to get one half hearted hit on a subsurface fly and one attack on a floating spider by a bream...and the bream missed the fly by a couple of inches!! Either the bream needed glasses or the visibility was that bad. As I said, I know I need practice casting, since the only thin I caught were several cypress branches. Ron managed not to catch any of those, but he didn't do any better with the fish than I did. Our next trip was planned for the Saturday before Easter, but we ended up foregoing that, since neither of us was enthusiastic about fishing when the predicted high was 48°F. I did enough of that cold weather fishing when I lived in Michigan. Of course four days later, it is supposed to be in the 80s. Welcome to Louisiana weather!!

Mark Delaney

Big News on the LNG Plant Front!

On March 29 Shell announced that it was cancelling plans to build the proposed Gulf Landing LNG plant that was to be built 38 miles south of Cameron. This was the only LNG plant permitted with the "open loop" technology where millions of gallons of sea water per day from the Gulf of Mexico would have been chlorinated, used

to regasify liquefied natural gas and then discharged back into the Gulf of Mexico. The process would kill all zooplankton, fish and invertebrate larva in the water used, possibly resulting in dire consequences for Gulf species. Shell cited market conditions for abandoning the project, and although it is unclear whether the heavy lobbying by the "Gumbo Alliance" of commercial and recreational fisherman, charter captains, and shrimpers had any real effect on Shell's decision, thanks are due to all those who lent a hand in lobbying against this potentially devastating plant, especially when there are a couple of "closed loop" technologies available that would not be so harmful to the Gulf habitat.

Getting Ready

With a new spring, if you haven't done so already over the winter, there are a few maintenance issues with your fly rods and reels that you should take care of before your first time out. Inspect your fly rods, making sure all the guides are intact, and no windings on the guides are coming loose. Repair or get them repaired (depends on how much of "hands-on" person you are). Inspect the and clean the ferrules on the rods. It is no fun having to transport an 8 foot plus rod in a car with maximum linear storage space of 5 feet...if the rod has decided to permanently become an 8 foot plus rod due to a stuck ferrule. Clean and lubricate your fly reels. Clean your fly lines. If you have the type of fly lines that need to be occasionally lubricated, do so before the start of the season (not all fly lines need lubrication, follow the manufacturer's instructions). Replace your old leaders. Make sure you have plenty of tippet in your kit of the pound tests you need. If you tie your own leaders, now is the time to tie a few up. Reorganize your fly boxes, so you know what is where. All this can be easily accomplished on a rainy afternoon, and will make your initial outings this spring much more pleasurable.

Help Needed at GCC Conclave & Expo in May

Robert Peet is asking for volunteers to help man the FFF enrollment booth at the GCC Conclave and Expo. He has 28 slots and thus far 6 volunteers. With enough volunteers, everyone will only have to serve a short time and will still be able to enjoy the Conclave. Please keep in mind that this is a great opportunity for the "challenged" to excel – not everyone is a super fly tier, rod builder, caster, etc. All that this requires is that you

be able to smile, thank people for coming, and have a few positive words on what and why FFF is a great association. You can contact Robert Peet at rjpeet@comcast.net.

Mark Delaney is looking for fly tiers to volunteer to help instruct the introductory fly tying sessions at the conclave. There will be twelve one hour sessions, 9, 10 and 11 am and 1, 2 and 3 pm both Saturday and Sunday. Thus far there are Mark and two tiers from the Piney Woods Fly Fishers signed up. Patterns to be tied are a Woolly Worm/Bugger, a Gill Getter and a Gurgler. Pattern sheets will be provided. Mark Delaney can be contacted at chemprof2001@yahoo.com.

The Auctions and Raffles chair, Syd Smith has sent this request: We are a scarce two months away from the event, so now is the time to get very serious about contributions. Most any item related to fly fishing and the outdoors will be appropriate. Boxes of flies are always popular as well as related art work, etc. Please be inventive, and please be generous. I am the chair for the Raffles/Auctions (R/A), and will welcome any items you may want to contribute. If any members would like to contribute items they produce for profit, remember we can furnish a letter allowing for tax credit. For those who are contributing, please contact me as soon as possible detailing the nature of the contribution, so I can set it up into raffles or auctions. We also need to arrange delivery of the items. Should you be coming to the conclave, which I certainly hope is the case, you can deliver items directly to me as I will be there from Thursday, May 17, on. If you cannot attend, items can be sent to me at the address below and I will send you a receipt of acceptance detailing all that has been received. Syd Smith, 1110 Broad Ave., Ste. 600, Gulfport, MS 39501 e-mail: sydzach@bellsouth.net.

Gulf Coast Conference Registration Forms and Schedule Now Online

The registration form for the Gulf Coast Conclave and Expo is now online at <http://gulfcoastfff.org/index.php?page=expo> as well as the schedule of workshops, activities, etc. Remember to get your registration in before May 5th to qualify for discounts. The general fee is \$8 before May 5 and \$10 after, good for a member and spouse. Other workshops will cost as indicated under the workshops link. There are 27 workshops so there are too many to list here. The Friday evening crawfish boil will be \$13 before May 5 and \$15 after. The Saturday evening banquet is \$25 before May 5 and \$30 after.

Freshwater Fly of the Month

Beaded Damsel Nymph



Hook: Daiichi #1180, size 12

Thread: 6/0 Uni, olive

Eyes: Burned mono colored black

Tail: Olive marabou

Body: Strung 10/0 glass beads, yellow

Wing Case: Turkey coated with Flexament

Thorax: Dark olive dubbing

Tying Instructions: Put 4 beads onto hook shank and into vice. Double a piece of fine ribbing wire (like a bobbin threader) and thread 4 more beads on there, and then run the cut ends of the wire forward through the 4 beads on the hook with a loop of wire hanging out of the back of the assembly. Cut a 6 inch piece of olive thread and thread a single bead onto it, to the middle, and double the thread. Cut a marabou tip slightly longer than you want, then strip some fibers from the butt, giving you a little extra stem to work with. Start the tying thread at the front of the hook. Thread the marabou stem and the doubled tying thread with the single bead into the wire loop at the back. Very carefully pull this through all 8 beads and out the front, leaving the tips of the marabou hanging out the back. Remove the wire, pull the doubled thread tight, pull marabou forward to desired length at the tail, and bind it all down at the front of the hook. Then finish the eyes/thorax/wingcase like you would any other damsel nymph.

Damsel flies and their nymphs are important in the food chains of most ponds where bream and other bass and panfish are found. Occasionally bream will be very focused on eating damsel nymphs. The nymphs swim relatively well so a retrieve with short strips and stops ought to be effective.



Saltwater Fly of the Week

Rattle Rouser



Hook: Mustad 92611, offset straightened, or other long-shanked hook, 2 to 3/0

Eyes: Lead or turned brass dumbbell eyes

Body: Mylar tubing

Tail: Marabou or frayed mylar from body

Wing: Bucktail or synthetic hair of choice

Rattle: Glass worm rattle

Tying Instructions: Tie in the dumbbell eyes about one quarter of the hook shaft length back from the eye on the top of the hook. Tie in a piece of mylar tubing large enough to slide a worm rattle inside it just behind the dumbbell eyes. Insert the glass worm rattle into the mylar tubing and then tie the end of the mylar tubing down on top of the hook near the bend of the hook. If you use a piece of mylar tubing that is long enough, you can fray the ends of the tubing to make a tail for the fly. If you want more action in your fly, trim off any excess. At this point remove the fly from the vise and coat the threads holding the dumbbell eyes with epoxy and the mylar tubing encasing the worm rattle with epoxy. Rotate the fly until the epoxy cures (an epoxy wheel is useful for this step). Remount the fly in the vise, hook point up. If you decided to trim off the excess mylar, now tie in a tail of marabou, tie off and trim the thread. Cover the winding with head cement. Restart the thread at the head of the fly, and tie in the wing using the desired colors of bucktail or desired synthetic hair. The wing should extend above the hook point. Tie off using a whip finish, and coat the windings with head cement.

This fly is designed to be semi-weedless and also to attract fish using sound, an important idea when water visibility is poor. The fly is reported to be a killer for not only saltwater species, but bass as well. If you don't have mylar tubing, a flat braid such as diamond braid can be used to cover a worm rattle tied to the hook shank. The fly should then be epoxied as described above.

Calendar

April 17 NLFF Mtg., 7 pm, Camp Forbing, LA
April 17 Contraband Fly Casters Meeting, 6 pm,
Casting Clinic at Prien Lake Park in Lake
Charles followed by dinner
April 23 RSFF Fly Tying, 7 pm, Wildlife and Fisheries
Bldg., Quail Dr., Baton Rouge, LA
April 26 NO FF Mtg., 7:30 pm, Whitney Bank Bldg,
1441 Metairie Road, Metairie LA
April 30 ORFF Mtg., 7 pm, 226 Lakeside Dr., Monroe,
LA
May 1 AFR Mtg., 6 pm, Grace Presbyterian Church,
518 Roselawn Blvd., Lafayette, LA
May 4-5 Smallmouth Rendezvous, Tahlequah
Community Building, Tahlequah, OK 74464
May 5 RSFF's Fly Fishing 101, 8:30 am -3:30 pm,
Waddill Outdoors Education Center, 4142 N.
Flannery Road, Baton Rouge
May 14 RSFF Mtg., 7 pm, Wildlife and Fisheries
Bldg., Quail Dr., Baton Rouge, LA
May 15 NL FF Mtg., 7 pm, Camp Forbing, LA
May 15 CFC Mtg., 6 pm tying, 7 pm meeting, Room
204, Kirkman Hall, McNeese campus, Lake
Charles, LA
May 18-20 FFF Gulf Coast Expo, Fri 12-4:30 pm, Sat &
Sun 8:30-4:30 pm Lake Charles Civic
Center, Lake Charles, LA

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