

October 2006

Contraband

Fly Casters

Tom Nixon Chapter

October Meeting: Tuesday October 17, 2006 in Room 202 of Kirkman Hall on the McNeese campus, Lake Charles, LA. Flytying: 6:00 pm, Meeting and presentation 7:00 pm. Presentation: How to tie several Tom Nixon patterns, including the Calcasieu Pigboat

President's Message

The weather is finally beginning to cool down. Some interesting things will be happening this month and early next month. This coming Saturday the "1st Annual Saltwater Flyfisher's Picnic" will be taking place on October 14th at Woodland Plantation in Myrtle Grove. Featured guests include Flip Pallot, Tim Borski, Chico Fernandez, Enrico Puglisi, and Conway Bowman. Presentations from anglers with local expertise will also be featured (including one from our own Ron Begnaud). Lunch and dinner will be served, featuring authentic Louisiana cuisine. At dinner there will also be live music featured. There will also be an auction. A cash bar will be available as well. Proceeds will go towards the "America's Wetlands" campaign. Registration is \$50, which includes everything. For more information call Alec Griffin at Uptown Angler at 504/529-3597. If you plan on attending please call Alec so he can get an estimate of attendees. Unfortunately, I can't make it....I really wish I could.

The first weekend in November the Toledo Bend Rendezvous takes place (Nov. 3-5) at North Toledo Bend State Park near Zwolle, LA. For more details, see Walter McLendon's page at <http://home.sprynet.com/~waltermc/Rendez/indexR.html>. Cost for housing for the weekend is \$30, and if you attend you are asked to bring some food to share. You'll need bedding and or a sleeping bag and pillow. You'll be able to fish, or to learn

new tying techniques from various tyers who will be present (and there will be some excellent tyers there.) The next meeting of the officers of the new Gulf Coast Council will be Saturday night at this meeting. Ron Foreman and I will both be attending (as an officer, I more less should be there...but believe me some fishing will also occur.)

In this issue of the newsletter you'll see some reports on both freshwater and saltwater fishing as well. Not all of the news in freshwater in the Lake Charles area is bad.

Mark Delaney

Fishing Reports

The last three times I've gone fishing it has been in freshwater. Ron Foreman and I took a trip to the Burned-Out Bridge in west Calcasieu parish. The weather forecast was for relatively mild temperatures and sunny skies. Don't trust weathermen!! It was well over 90 by 9 am with almost no breeze. On top of that we got rained on. We had a few hits and no hookups and got out of there before noon, because it was just too hot and miserable.

My next trip was a solo trip to scout around Sam Houston Jones State Park. I had not been there for 14 months (pre-Rita). They've done a good job of cleaning up downed trees, and rebuilding

facilities. I tried fishing in the main pond system, and got a few hits and no hookups. I then tried casting from the bridge separating the ponds so I could get a better view of what was going on. The fish that were hitting my size 10 fly were very small bream, the longest being about 3". They had partially drained the main pond system to try and alleviate some of the salinity that got into the ponds from the hurricane. The pond system is still about 15" below its normal level. More rain is needed. Saltwater damage in the main pond system is evident. Maybe 10% of the bald cypress have died and the rest are looking rather sickly, with lots of brown foliage. Bald cypress are not very saltwater tolerant.

The next trip was with Ron Foreman. We took Ron's 14 foot aluminum boat and launched at the Calcasieu parish boat launch just east of Hwy171 (turn right on the road you'd turn left on to go to Sam Houston Jones State Park). We were on the water by 7:15 am or so. Ron had one decent hit and either reacted too fast or too slow. The closest I got was a small needlefish nudging my floating purple spider. By 11:00 am I'd thrown everything in my flyboxes that I thought was reasonable. Then I spotted a few small lures...actually small spoons made from 00 Indiana spinner blades and 00 willow leaf spinner blades. No feathers (but I wanted to catch something!! So tradition went out the window.) I put on a gold and yellow spoon made from an Indiana spinner blade which had a number 10 hook. Within 10 casts I had caught a 6" bass. Ron switched to a more traditionally tied spoon fly with a number 6 hook. He then had a hit with about a 12" bass, but he actually pulled the fly out of the fishes mouth...while it was jumping, so I got to see it. I then caught a large bluegill on my little spoon. Not long after another bass hit Ron's spoon fly right near the boat, so close and so near the top I actually saw the fish hit the fly. Once again Ron was a little too quick and pulled the fly out of the mouth of the bass. This one was a bit smaller, I'd guess at 9 inches or so. Then I hooked another bass and landed it. This one went 9 inches. It was getting on about noon by then and we headed in. I've always thought of spoon flies as saltwater flies. I'll have to readjust my thinking.

Ron Begnaud has reported seeing numbers of redfish in the marshes lately. But this past weekend he investigated some shallow flats and found the fish to be quite spooky. He then retreated to some flats that were a bit deeper. He reported the fish were still spooky, but he did catch

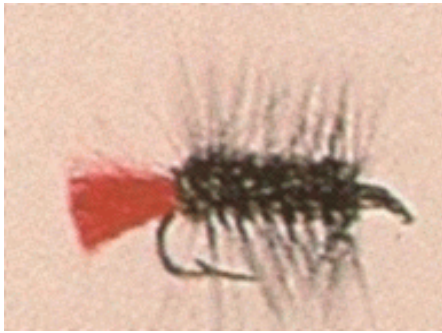
fish. Reports from the rest of the Calcasieu estuary continue to be mostly good. Hit the right spot at the right tide, and you'll do well.

North Toledo Bend Rendezvous

The date is Friday November 3rd thru Sunday the 5th, 2006. Rendezvous is the result of several fly fishermen gathering to fish and tie flies at the state park many years ago. After a couple of years of growing pains they found the park's group facility! And what a facility indeed! A capacity of 150 people in 5 heated log bunkhouses (30 beds each), a heated central shower and restroom building with nice night lighting on all the sidewalks and a large main log building with A/C, a commercial kitchen, dining hall, fireplace, a long front porch, picnic table and a large barbeque trailer out front. People begin gathering just before 3 PM on Friday when the park staff unlocks the facility and checks out our cooking gear. Families and individuals check in at the main office and ask for their FREE pass for the "Fly Fishing Group". Once at the facility, the first order of business is finding the necessary bunks in one of the 5 bunkhouses. Segmented for couples, male singles, female singles, families with kids and the last for "Non-Snorers Only". The bedroom in each bunkhouse is designated for a dressing room "not sleeping" so that you can have some privacy when needed. This room might also be used by a mother with a new baby. Next to the main hall where you meet fellow fly fishers, sign the register and pay for the weekend. The family fee is \$40 for the weekend or \$20 for a day or night. Single's fee is \$30 for the weekend or \$15 for the day or night. What a bargain!! Next to unloading food to the kitchen. Everyone is asked to bring their necessary foods for the weekend. Most people bring to share, so all you need to provide is a nice sized dish for each feast or meal. This gives you a chance to show off your favorite dish or creation! You can imagine out of 60 to 65 people, the feast we have! Eating is a real treat! No restaurant could provide better food! To pass the day, all the flytyers set up their vises in the dining hall on the tables. We always manage to have plenty of room for eating when the time comes. All day and into the late evening, tyers do their thing while spectators sit, watch and ask questions. This is not an insignificant event because some of the top fly tyers in the nation attend Rendezvous every year! This is your one chance to spend as much time as you like sitting with an outstanding tyer and learn the best skills! - Walter McLendon

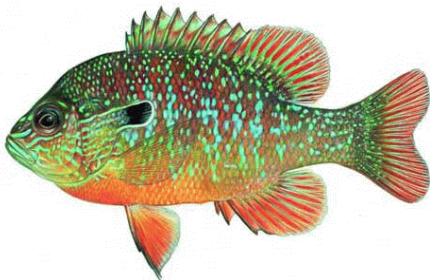
Freshwater Fly of the Month

Zulu



Tail: Short red yarn
Body: Peacock herl
Hackle: Dark, tied in at bend and palmered forward
Thread: Black

This rather simple fly is one included as a panfish fly in all editions of his book "Fly Tying and Fly Fishing for Bass and Panfish." Peacock herl bodies are known fish attractors. The Zulu is really nothing more than a woolly worm with peacock herl replacing the colored chenille. The fly can be weighted with lead or other wire to sink it deeper, or be left unweighted as desired. Tie in the red yarn tail at the bend of the hook. Tie in your hackle. Then tie in your peacock herl. A tip for those who have not tied peacock herl bodies before: Tie in 4 to 6 pieces of peacock herl at the bend of the hook. Wrap these pieces around the thread forming a "peacock chenille." Wrap this around the hook to form the peacock herl body and tie off the peacock herl leaving enough room to make a nice head. Trim off any excess peacock herl. Palmer the hackle forward and tie off just behind the eye of the hook. Trim off the excess hackle. Wrap the thread to form a nice neat head. Whip finish to complete the fly. A rather easy fly to tie and one that's been around a long time. The reason it's been around a long time - it's very effective!!



Saltwater Fly of the Month

Feather Finger Mullet



Hook: Mustad 34007 1/0
Eyes: Yellow or amber 3D plastic eyes
Thread: White 6/0
Tail: 4 white saddle hackles, topped by two black saddle hackles
Body: Heavily palmered white saddle hackle
Wing: Four black saddle hackles

This fly is tied to imitate a finger mullet and is designed to more or less suspend in the water. It is a little unusual in construction since the wing tail and body are all feathers. There are no tricks at all to tying this fly. I recommend when gluing the 3D plastic eyes on that you use E6000, which is an adhesive that crafters use that contains no toluene. (It does contain a chlorinated solvent, so you still need adequate ventilation). Toluene, which is in products such as Goop, can craze or haze various plastics. You can also make your own 3D eyes by putting a drop of fabric paint of the desired color on the backside of a clean lid from a tub of margarine. After that dries you can add a drop of black fabric paint to the center. Peel the eyes off the lid as needed and glue them on your fly.

I tied this fly, and yes I know the point is missing from the hook. The fly was damaged during casting practice and met an unfortunate end by landing on the concrete of a driveway. - Mark Delaney



Calendar

- Oct 14-15 1st Annual Saltwater fly fishers Picnic, Woodland Plantation, Myrtle Grove, LA
- Oct 17 NLFF Mtg., 7 pm, Camp Forbing, LA
- Oct 17 CFC Mtg., 6 pm tying, 7 pm meeting, Room 202, Kirkman Hall, McNeese campus, Lake Charles, LA
- Oct 19 PBFF Fly Tying, 7 pm, Glass Menagerie, 1845 Causeway Blvd., Covington, LA
- Oct 19 NOFF Fly Tying, 7:30 pm Whitney Bank Bldg., 141 Metairie Rd., Metairie, LA
- Oct 23 RSFF Fly Tying, 7 pm, Wildlife and Fisheries Bldg., Quail Dr., Baton Rouge, LA
- Oct 23 ORFF Mtg., 7 pm, 226 Lakeside Dr., Monroe, LA
- Oct 26 NOFF Mtg., 7:30 pm, Whitney Bank Bldg, 1441 Metairie Road, Metairie LA
- Nov 1 PBFF Mtg., 7 pm, Louisiana Food & Spirits on Lee Lane, Covington, LA
- Nov 3-5 Toledo Bend Rendezvous, North Toledo Bend State Park, Zwolle, LA

Officers

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Club website: NEW:

<http://www.contrabandflycasters.com>

Old: <http://cbfc0.tripod.com>