



FREE STATE FLY FISHERS NEWSLETTER

Fall 2022

President's Message:

Well FSFF'ers, Fall is here! Arguably the best fishing season of all four seasons, (although if you picked Spring, you wouldn't get much of an argument from me).

Given that I'm no Spring chicken, I've fished my way through many, many seasons and I've arrived at a place now where I can walk out the door in the morning, feel the air on my face, observe leaf conditions on the trees, and immediately conclude what season is coming. Just last week I walked out the door and IMMEDIATELY sensed: "It's Rocktober"!!! And yup, it wasn't long before I heard reports of Rockfish in the mouths of local creeks.



For me, the Fall season is the most conflicted of all. My Grandson illustrates perfectly my dilemma in these two pictures.

What's a guy to do??????????????

The muzzleloader season is in and the Rut isn't far behind. But there are diving birds in the mouth of the Severn that are giving away the Rockfish locations below. The White Perch have vacated the tidal creeks making way for easy access to the tidal Pickerel populations. The weeds are dying on the Eastern

Shore farm ponds making the bass and pickerel easy targets.



Should I grab my #5 rod and chase panfish with the Golden Retrievers we tied? #6 rod and chase the Fall stocked trout with those Clousers we tied? #7 rod and chase the Fall Largemouth bass bite with

Adam's deer hair flies? #8 and throw Joe's Lefty Deceivers we tied under diving birds???? Wow, what problems we have.

I think I'll grab my muzzleloader and go sit in my tree stand until my poor head can figure out which fly rod to grab for my next outing. I hope you all have similar problems, and that you call up a member and head out and enjoy some fellowship in Fly Fishing.

Happy Fall!

See you on the water,

Gary

Gary Grey
2022 Free State Fly Fishers President

Upcoming FSFF Sponsored Meetings, Events and Activities

It's only mid-October our club has already sponsored two monthly meetings, two member-led fly tying sessions, two Saturday Morning Hands-on Sessions, and one fly casting clinic with four different concurrent sessions! Hardly a week goes by when the club does not have something scheduled to bring our members together!

Thanks to Frank Bowne, our club website's events page at <https://fs-ff.com/index.php/events-2/> continues to be updated as more meeting speakers are lined up by Gary Grey and Luis Santiago signs up another club member to lead a first Saturday of the month fly tying session. So come out, learn something new, and keep in touch with your fellow members as you just might catch more fish the next time you go out fly fishing as a result!



Wednesday Club Meeting Presentations

Here's our current club meeting schedule.

November 2: Jim Delle Bovi giving a presentation entitled "Inshore Kayak Fishing the Delmarva Peninsula". Jim has spent about a year relatively systematically fishing the Delmarva Peninsula from Lewes, DE to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and will share his experiences with us.

Saturday Morning Fly Tying Sessions

We are continuing our first Saturday of the month club member led fly tying sessions from September through June. Come join your fellow club members starting at 10 AM at the clubhouse to learn how to tie several new fly patterns. In advance of each fly tying session, members will receive an email message listing the member leading that session, what fly patterns will be tied and any materials you need to bring to the session. This information will also be posted on the club website's calendar of events in advance of each fly tying session.



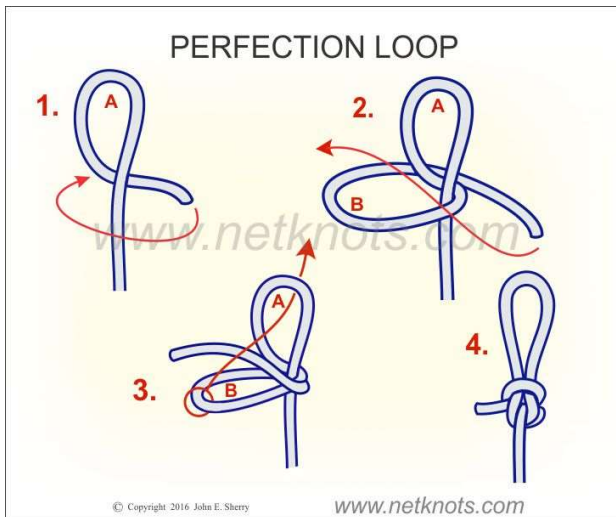
Member-led fly tying sessions are scheduled for:

- November 5: Scott Hipple
- December 3: Luis Santiago- favorite Smallmouth patterns of 2022
- January 7: Don Vance-Pistol Pete streamer
- February 4: Mark Bange-bluegill flies; Harry Steiner-soft hackle flies
- March 4th
- April 1st
- May 6th
- June 3rd

Saturday Morning Hands-on Sessions

Thanks to our fellow club members' willingness to share their experiences, we have Hands-on Sessions already scheduled through June 2023. All Hands-on Sessions will be held on the third Saturday of the month at the clubhouse from 10 AM to 12 PM unless otherwise noted.

**November 19: Joe Bruce and Duber Winters’
“Tying Fishing Knots for Every Fly Fishing
Situation”**



We can make the most perfect cast, tie a fly which perfectly matches the hatch...but if the knot we tied connecting the tippet to the leader does not hold, we aren't going to land the fish! Our two resident experts of fishing knot tying—Joe Bruce and Duber Winters—will be teaching up the handful of fly fishing knots we will ever need. And, most importantly, teach us how to tie them correctly! Joe will demonstrate the Albright, non-slip loop and Homer Rhoads knots. Duber will teach the back to back Uni Knot, the Clinch knot, the not the Duber knot loop knot, the popper-dropper rig and how to tie a 2 fly drop shot rig. This is a true hands-on session you can't afford to miss!

December 17: John Keough's "Introduction to Fly Rod Building" Class

Way back in 2020, thanks to John, the club started up a fly rod building class which was going to be kicked off by a Saturday Hands-on Session. But as we all know, COVID came along and shut down that opportunity. Well, John has agreed to re-start a fly rod building class, again, starting with a hands-on session to demonstrate what's really involved in building your own fly rods. He will sign up club members interested in diving in deeper for a continuing class, ending everyone having built their own fly rod.



January 21: Joe Bruce's "A Host of Fly Tying Techniques and Tips from a Commercial Fly Tyer"

There are many, many fly tyers not only within our club, but across the mid-Atlantic and beyond who have learned many new fly tying techniques from Joe, both in person and via his dozens of published books. Here's your incredible opportunity to learn what Joe has learned from his 348 years of tying flies professionally. (Yep, he taught George Washington how to tie flies instead of cutting down cherry trees for a hobby! Martha was very excited.)



February 18: Mark Bange's "Kayak Fishing in Local Waters" class 10 AM – 2 PM (with group lunch)

Back by popular demand and coming off two prior sell-out crowds (due to the offer of a free lunch with dessert!), Mark will be teaching his truly informative kayak fishing class. Given he updates his presentation and information delivery for every



new class, if you have been in this class before, it's worth auditing the class this time as you are guaranteed to learn something new. And who knows, maybe this time Mark will sell his fishing kayak to someone in the audience versus having to carry it back home after the class! 😊

March 18: Joe Bruce's "Everything You Need to Know About Fishing for Pickerel"

And speaking of being back by popular demand, we have asked Joe to come back (again) and share how in the heck he consistently catches all those HUGE pickerel, one after the other. Some of us are convinced he has learned how to speak pickerel and has found out exactly which colors they see underwater and what retrieve drives them to attack a fly. And Joe will be bringing his fishing kayak, all rigged up for pickerel and will be actively demonstrating his pickerel fly fishing retrieve



techniques. So come out and learn from the pickerel master.

April 15: Mike Mattia, Larry Oakey, John Rentch and Mark Bange's "A Virtual Fly Fishing Tour of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore Ponds"

Not since the Beatles landed in the United States has there been such excitement about this new foursome and their upcoming 'virtual tour'. Well ok, we promise not to ask Mike Mattia to sing or

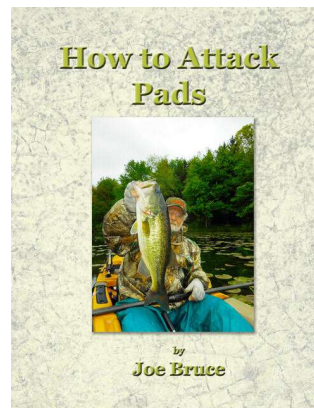


Larry Oakey hum in the background. But we can promise they will share some outstanding insights on where to fly fish on the Eastern Shore. See the one page flyer posted on the club's website's calendar of event for this Saturday Hands-on Session for the menu of ponds to be the

focus of this session. Come prepared to find out where to fly fish on the Eastern Shore!

May 20: Joe Bruce's "How to Attack the Pads and Catch More Fish"

Only one person in our club could talk about "attacking the pads" and fill the clubhouse with



fellow fly fishers interested in what he has to say. Well, this is the topic of Joe's recent book, now on sale with copies available at this Saturday Hands-on Session. There are years if not decades of photographic evidence that there are some very

BIG fish just waiting under the lily pads for their next meal—just look at the cover of Joe's new book. Now we will all learn how to extract these fish from this heavy cover and document just how big they are with our own selfies!



June 7: Wednesday Club Meeting—Casting clinic with Members Casting with Their Own Fly Rods 6:30-8:30 PM (includes group dinner)

It wouldn't be a June club meeting without another one of our extremely successful fly casting clinics. All of us who have participated in one of these clinics over the years has come away with some new insight into how to fly cast better. This includes fly casting while sitting down in a kayak. Once again we will have a team of fly casting instructors available for all participating club members and guests to self-select which set of fly casting skills do they want to focus on for the evening. A truly hands on session. And a group dinner is included in the cost...yeah, it's free, with drinks and dessert!



Wednesday Night Beer Ties

We're continuing another long held club tradition...Beer Ties at the Killarney House in Davidsonville. And yes, this is just an excuse for club members, friends, family members and guests to gather together to drink adult beverages, eat bar food, talk, share fishing stories...and, oh yeah, tie flies.



Wednesday Night Beer Ties at 6:00 PM are on the fourth Wednesday night of every even numbered month throughout the year:

- October 26th
- December 28th
- February 22nd
- April 26th
- June 28th

Club Sponsored Outings

See the club website's calendar of events for more details on upcoming club sponsored outings. And remember you need to have signed the club's liability waiver form prior to participating in any club sponsored outing.



December 7 Holiday Party

Another long held Free State Fly Fishers tradition is coming back this year—our Holiday Party! Come join your fellow club members and their spouses and partners for good food, drinks, incredible raffle prizes and lots of holiday cheer. Once again, we will be gathering at Mike’s Crab House on the South River at the Riva Road Bridge. Come join us for drinks starting at 6:00 PM with dinner being served at 6:30 PM.

You will want to arrive in time to carefully study all the **raffle prizes** being donated by fellow club members. We are still taking donations from club members—please reach out to Jack Prouty at jackprouty1@gmail.com if you have a fly fishing related item you are willing to donate for the Holiday Party raffle.

And we will also have a **50/50 raffle** to provide the opportunity for bringing home some holiday cash

so you can purchase even more fly fishing stuff for yourself. (Hello, Santa Claus is a fly fisher as well!)

PLEASE fill out the Holiday Party invitation form and mail in your check by November 25th. Copies of the Holiday Party invitation form and the dinner menu choices are included at the end of this newsletter and are posted by the club’s website in the calendar of events.

Thanks to Don Vance for continuing in his role of coordinating the Holiday Party and to Bill Smith for handling all the Party invitations and checks in his role as Club Treasurer. Without club members like Don, Bill and Jack stepping up and helping with the behind-the-scenes operations of the club, we could not provide so many unique opportunities to get together for fellowship through fly fishing!



Club News

2022 Bluegill Tournament Standings

We have less than a month remaining in the 2022



Biggest (and Smallest!) Bluegill Tournament as the last day to submit entries is Tuesday, 15 November 2022. Here

is our latest leaderboard:

First Place – John Rentch, 11.5 inches, 26 May, Blairs Pond, DE



Fourth Place – Pat Brophy, 9.0 inches, 7 June, Alpine Lake, WV



Second Place – Rich Galena, 9.25 inches, 7 June, Alpine Lake, WV



Fifth Place -- Mike Mattia, 8.75 inches, 10 May, Private Pond, DE



Third Place -- Larry Oakey, 9.125 inches, 23 April, Private Pond, DE



Smallest Bluegill -- Andy Grosko, 2 5/8" Unicorn Lake, MD



There is still time to find a 12" bluegill and take over first place...or catch a 2" bluegill and claim the smallest bluegill. The arrival of fall means the Eastern Shore ponds will soon clear of the algae. As the algae disappears and water cools, bluegills and other fish species in those ponds will become more receptive to your flies. This is a great time of year to fish the ponds.

Entries will be accepted through Tuesday, November 15, 2022. You will find the 2022 tournament rules on the club's website at <https://fs-ff.com/index.php/bluegill-tournament-2022/>.

Mark Bange, Bluegill Tournament Coordinator

Pickereel Contest 2022/2023



And even before the Biggest Bluegill Tournament closes out, our

Biggest Pickereel Contest will open November 1, 2022 and close on April 30, 2023. You can find the current rules for the Biggest Pickereel Contest on the club's website at:

<https://fs-ff.com/index.php/pickereel-tournament-2021-2022/>.

A reminder to club members who have been known to cast live bait*, rule number 3: "Fish must be caught on a fly via a flyrod. (No live or cut bait, or lures for conventional tackle may be used.) "

Mark Bange, Pickereel Contest Coordinator

*Not mentioning any names, Gary Grey and Don Vance!

Maryland Fly Fishing Trail Website Goes Live By Rich Batiuk

On September 24, 2022, which was the 50th anniversary of National Hunting and Fishing Day,

we were proud to announce the launch of Maryland's Fly Fishing Trail. With 48 sites, 2 sites each in Maryland's 23 counties and the City of Baltimore, this "first in the nation" statewide fly fishing trail initiative was led by Rich Batiuk (chair), Randy Dwyer (co-chair), Joe Evans, Shawn Kimbro and John Neely.

What is unique about Maryland's Fly Fishing Trail is that statewide, we are providing Trail users with opportunities to catch nearly 40 different fish species, including coastal saltwater, Chesapeake Bay tidal, and warmwater and coldwater stocks through fly fishing.

We have partnered with numerous fly fishing groups and conservation nonprofits to introduce more women, younger anglers, anglers of color and anglers of varied economic status to what makes fly fishing so special. We also want to promote discovery of less pressured sites across the state as an alternative to popular, well known fly fishing waters.

Finally, we are introducing Trail users to the incredible array of fly fishing guides, fly shops, fishing tackle stores and a dozen different fly fishing groups across Maryland which are closest to each Trail site and can provide valuable information, mentoring opportunities and gear for Trail users.

So go to Maryland Fly Fishing Trail website at <https://fishandhuntmaryland.com/marylands-fly-fishing-trail> and take a look at Maryland's many and varied fly fishing opportunities. You will find a wealth of information on each of the 48 Trail sites, everything from location, address, where to fly fish, boat launches and rentals, species to be caught gear to use, recommended flies, stream flow, tidal conditions, nearby guides and fly shops and more.

And to whet your appetite, here's a complete list of the 48 Trail sites by Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City listed alphabetically:

Town Creek-Allegany County
 Lake Habeeb-Allegany County
 Chesapeake Bay at Sandy Point-Anne Arundel County
 Thomas Point-Anne Arundel County
 Canton Waterfront Park-Baltimore City
 Masonville Cove-Baltimore City
 Gunpowder Falls-Baltimore County
 Loch Raven Reservoir-Baltimore County
 Solomons Island-Calvert County
 Hutchins Pond-Calvert County
 Choptank River at Red Bridges-Caroline County
 Smithville Lake-Caroline County
 Piney Run Reservoir-Carroll County
 Morgan Run-Carroll County
 North East River-Cecil County
 Octoraro Creek-Cecil County
 Mattawoman Creek at Mattingly Park-Charles County
 Mallows Bay on the Potomac River-Charles County
 Chesapeake Bay/Honga River-Dorchester County
 Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge-Dorchester County
 Big Hunting Creek-Frederick County
 Monocacy River-Frederick County
 Upper Savage River-Garrett County
 Youghiogheny River-Garrett County
 Deer Creek-Harford County
 Susquehanna Flats-Harford County
 Patapsco River-Daniels Dam Area-Howard County
 Middle & Little Patuxent Rivers-Howard County
 Chesapeake Bay/Chester River-Kent County
 Lower Sassafras River/Turners Creek-Kent County
 Clopper Lake-Montgomery County
 Seneca Creek-Montgomery County
 Governor Bridge Natural Area Ponds-Prince George's County
 Patuxent River/Jug Bay-Prince George's County
 Chesapeake Bay/Kent Island-Queen Anne's County
 Unicorn Lake-Queen Anne's County
 Smith Island-Somerset County
 Janes Island-Somerset County
 St. Mary's Lake-St. Mary's County
 St. Mary's River-St. Mary's County
 Black Walnut Point-Talbot County

Wye East River-Talbot County
 Potomac River-Washington County
 Beaver Creek-Washington County
 Johnsons Pond-Wicomico County
 Upper Wicomico River-Wicomico County
 Upper Pocomoke-Worcester County
 Assawoman Bay-Worcester County



And here's our very own Luis Santiago at Janes Island State Park, one of the 48 Trail sites!

Featured Fly: Lefty's Deceiver

By Joe DeMeo

Deceivers can be tied in a variety of colors. The yellow/red deceiver is effective for pickerel and pike. The chartreuse/white deceiver is effective for stripers. Tied in smaller sizes, deceivers can be used for panfish such as white perch. It's the combination of bucktail and feathers which makes this fly so effective in imitating baitfish.

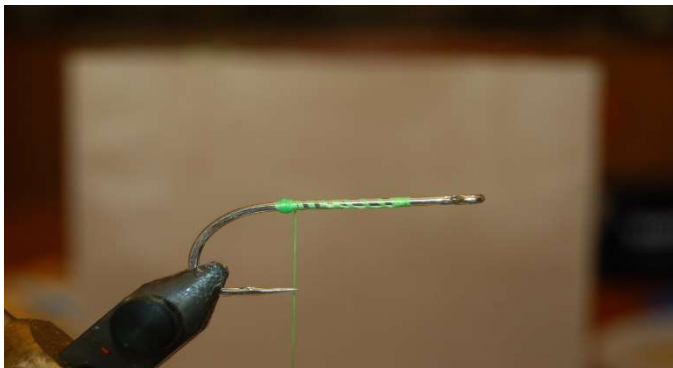


Material List

- Hook: Mustad S71 hook, 1/0
- Tail: Four hackles from deceiver saddle patch
- Flash: Krystal Flash, pearl
- Body: Tying thread, chartreuse
- Collar: Bucktail, white
- Wing: Bucktail, chartreuse
- Throat: Calf tail, red
- Eyes: Holographic, super pearl, 5/32"
- Thread: Danville flat waxed nylon, chartreuse, 210 denier
- Head Finish: UV resin, Head Cement, or Sally Hansen hard as nails

Tying Procedure

1. Place hook in the vise. Start tying thread about 2 eye lengths from the hook eye and spiral wrap to the bend of the hook and tie a thread bump. Position the thread at the front of the bump.



2. Select four hackles from a Deceiver saddle patch.



3. Align the feathers to make two pairs of the deceiver saddle hackles.



4. Mate the two pair of hackles, concave side to concave side, and tie on the top of the hook at the front of the thread bump. The length of the hackle tail should be 2-3 times the length of the hook shank.



5. Select about six strands of pearl Krystal flash and tie in along each side of the tail. The Krystal flash should extend about ¼ inch beyond the tail. Advance the thread to about two eye lengths from the hook eye.



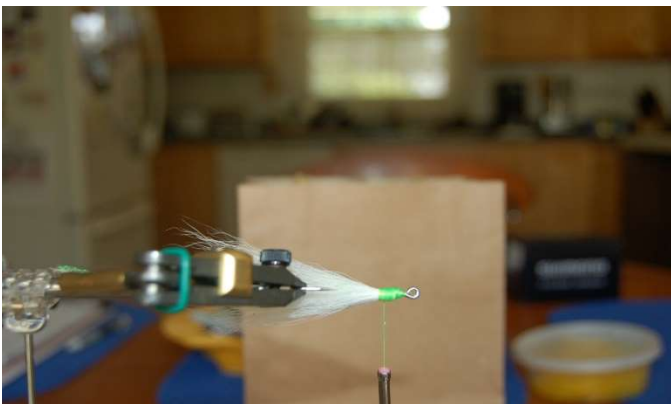
6. Select a small clump of white bucktail, remove the short hairs, and cut the bucktail so that its length does not go beyond halfway over the tail. Tie this clump to the side of the hook using firm but not tight wraps. Use your thumb to distribute the bucktail halfway around the hook and then lock in.



7. Repeat step 6. on the other side of the hook.



8. The bottom of the fly should now look like this.



9. Select a small clump of chartreuse bucktail, remove the short hairs, and cut to a length that is slightly longer than the white bucktail. Tie the

chartreuse bucktail in on top of the hook at the head of the fly. Cut a small clump of red calf tail and tie in at the bottom of the hook.



10. Whip finish and apply 5/32" holographic eyes to the head using a bodkin. Finish the head with UV resin, head cement or Sally Hansen Hard As Nails #800 clear.



[Editor's Note: This article was based on the handout shared with club members in advance of the October 1st fly tying session.]

How to Fly Fish Even Better: Sink-tips Versus Bobbers and Split Shot

By Joe Bruce

I have been a fan of sink-tips for decades. I have better control on a drift than the traditional strike Indicators (bobbers) and the use of split shot to get the fly on the bottom. I used to use this term when a fisherman came in the shop looking for indicators.

I have asked this question many times, "Where is the fastest water in a stream or river?" Sometimes I get strange looks.

What is the fastest water? It is the surface with the slower water on the bottom and there is moderate speed in the middle.

I will describe what happens with the traditional method. The rig is generally a strike indicator (bobber) above one or more split shot and a nymph a foot or two from the last shot. In the water column the bobbers are going down current the fastest, the fly and split shot are bringing up the rear and the line from the bobber to the shot is in some sort of "s" shape.

For the indicator to show a strike, the fly must be picked up by a fish, pull on the split shot and trigger a movement of the bobber on top, all this before you strike.

There is a problem with this system. A fish can pick up the fly move it around and drop it long before the shot is moved and alerts the fisherman by pulling on the indicator.

Another question I always ask when discussing fishing with an indicator, "Where do you usually see the take?" Most will say at the end of the drift.

What really happens is the fly is being pulled from the bottom and fish are used to seeing a nymph rise in the water column, the nymph is getting away and causes an "instinct strike".

With a sink-tip you eliminate the serpentine line effect with the bobber and shot and increase your chances of more opportunity to catch more fish. I feel a five-foot sink-tip with the fastest sink rate of at least four to five inches per second is ideal working a stream or river.

Therefore, I prefer the sink-tips. First, you only need a three-foot tippet. The object is to get the fly near the bottom.

Secondly, by lifting the rod tip a little in a up and down motion a little from the surface as the line drifts in the current I can create the illusion the fly is getting away many times on the same drift, increasing my chances of hooking more fish. In a drift I might be able to do this lift five to ten times.

Oh, you do have an indicator with this system, just watch the loop from the rod tip to the water, if it changes, like move more on the lift it is either the bottom or a fish's lips. In either case, strip strike.

We had a hands-on session last year making our own sink-tips, I have some material left. We could do it again. So eliminate the old bobber and enter the new world of sink-tips.

Places to Fish: Archer River Inlet – Aurukun, Far North Queensland, Australia By James Andrews

A blanket of smoke choked the view and our lungs. "Luckily" the water matched the sky after recent rough weather as suspended particulate waited for a break in the wind to fall back to the bottom of this shallow gulf. These unusual conditions had thrown the fish off too...and at least one that was not known for its fly eating came tight on my Chartreuse and White Clouser.

When Lee, our guide and lifetime angler of these waters, said "What the f&*\$ is that?", in a surprised and puzzled tone, I knew this fish was going to be a treat. It came to view with eyes as large as that of a permit and the body of a triggerfish minus the spine – the commonly seen, but rarely caught Batfish!



The odd, unusual, uncatchable, and especially absurd fish have become the new “trophies” in fly fishing as far as I’m concerned. When anglers began saltwater fly fishing it was arguably the Tarpon, and then on to the bird eating Giant Trevally aka “GT”. With the proliferation of social media, I suggest things started to go a different direction, to that of the absurd – as pictures of green bumphead parrotfish from the Indian Ocean – some in excess of 100 lbs. emerged it was game-on. In my social media feed the fish with the most attention are the obscure, and often massive, Triggerfish or Parrotfish from Sudan or Socotra Island, Goliath Tigerfish from Central African Republic, or Blue Bastards from the beaches of Queensland. This batfish was for me, a special fish, and on reflection, my favorite catch of all time.

Our home for the week we spent on the Archer River was the Eclipse FNQ, a mothership with Captain, Chef, Stew, 3 fishing boats and 3 guides. This setup enabled the 6 of us to fish from sunrise to sunset, apart from a leisurely lunch back on the boat.

The near complete lack of fishing pressure came as a surprise to me, it was both far more remote, and far less fished than I had imagined. Our trip to the Love River some 20 miles south has me wondering if there is less than a boat a week that enters that entire river.

Not knowing what level of knowledge, experience or “fly friendliness” I would encounter on this trip, I came in without expectations. I was immediately thrilled to learn that the guides not only were fly enthusiasts, but that there was a worm hatch which resulted in abundant catches of both Milkfish and Indo-Pacific Permit on fly the previous few days. This was over by the time we got to the water the first day – but the excitement of using scraps from other flies and literally cutting up some of my luggage to “match the hatch” of this worm was a thrilling way to start our time on the water.

In early September the rivers are low with no fresh water flow and effectively full ocean salinity. This leads to some unusual river catches, with ocean going fish being found far upriver from where the mangroves end.

Some Highlights:

Queenfish, all large – some gigantic, were so abundant we would have to move spots to avoid them and target other species.

Shallow sand flats on the Archer River with endless sight fishing to Queenfish and Barramundi.

Grouper (similar to Goliath Grouper) 100+ lbs. are abundant, and a fish caught off the back of the mothership risks being inhaled by one that tends to hide underneath – throwing a splash 20 feet in the air. I was able to get a saltwater catfish on the first night, but didn’t risk it a 2nd time. The Grouper are tackle destroyers – even my 12 wt. would have been no match.

Love River - Muddy flats with stingrays and Barramundi following, enabling you to pick them off the backs of the stingrays with a well-placed fly.



Coastal waters with sandy beaches and rock outcroppings with a morning offshore breeze makes them flat calm and gin clear. Working them with a shrimp fly produced many species of what they call Cod (Grouper type fish), Tusk fish, and other reef species.

No swimming and no wading! – The abundance of saltwater crocodiles makes boat angling your best bet. For areas you can fish from shore, a spotter, and a rod length away from the water at a minimum is required. Watching wallabies on the beach (very far away!) with their identity given away only by their hopping.

In my quest to rack up the species count, the Archerfish was a target. This critter has a habit of spitting bugs off leaves so it can eat them. It was a fan of my shrimp fly as well – but they are so aggressive they will also attack a fly equal in size to themselves.

The laziness of Barramundi cannot be understated. In many instances they simply will not move to eat your fly – it must hit them in the mouth. Twenty casts to the same spot on the same submerged log is not too many. In the current I saw one drift by half sideways – too lazy to even keep itself upright. This laziness ends immediately upon hookup, they are avid jumpers and are keen to get you tangled if given the chance.

After 6 days on the water, some 20 new species had been tacked on to my list. Many, many Barramundi were caught on fly. There was rarely any slow times when fishing, the average fish was large, and the variety was huge. This area is effectively off the radar for anglers outside of Australia, and even for them they are really only interested in the Barramundi. With a lack of good access, protected waters and lands, and very few outfitters this area will likely remain in this state for a long time – the same can't be said for many other destinations which have been on the decline.

For the sake of brevity, I'm going to gloss over the logistics of getting to and from a place such as the Archer River Inlet - suffice it to say it is time and resource intensive. I found enormous value, both mentally and practically, in adding margin for any issues that might pop up along the way. For example, by showing up 4 hours early on the flight from LA I was able to remedy the issue of not realizing I needed a Visa to get into Australia – whoops.



For details on the guides and the boat we stayed on feel free and email me and I can provide much more detail than I could post here or is available online, you can also view at: Weipa Sports Fishing - <https://www.weipasportsfishing.com.au/> Eclipse FNQ - <https://eclipsefnq.com.au/>



Kayak Fly Fishing

Kayak Fishing in the Fall

By Mark Bange

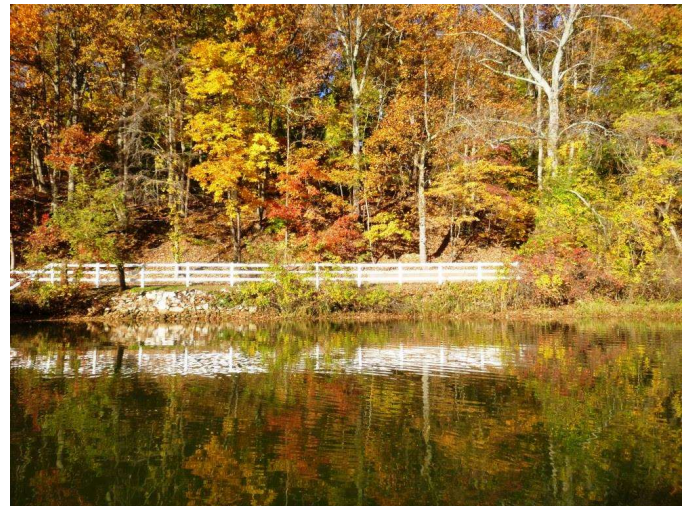
As the days shorten and tree leaves change color, many kayak anglers store their boats for the year. I understand why. There is always the chance of turbulent weather as we slide from August into September and it can get uncomfortably chilly in the late fall. Also, some anglers fear the cooling waters of fall with hypothermia on their minds. That's a fair concern. While Chesapeake Bay waters may average 80-plus degrees Fahrenheit in summer, they decrease to 60 degrees by November. Sixty-degree water can be perilous if you were to be stranded in it for a long time. But if you dress appropriately and wear a Personal Floatation Device and avoid fishing in high winds and choppy water, you will have no trouble staying upright and dry. Further, fishing with a friend or two is another way to enhance your safety on cool water outings.

But here is the biggest reason to keep your kayak at the ready in the fall. September through November offers some of the best local fishing of the year in tidal water, millponds and impoundments. The reason for that is because the fish we pursue also notice the change in weather and it energizes them.

Fish are highly responsive to water temperatures. As sunlight declines daily, waters cool. That cooldown brings largemouth bass from the depths to shallower water. Shorter days prompt the same

behaviors for Chesapeake stripers. They were scarce in tidal creeks during the summer because they preferred cooler oxygenated waters in the mainstem of the Bay. However, in the fall, the dropping water temperatures of rivers and creeks offer stripers a desirable environment. As a result, they will disburse to the Bay's many tributaries.

But cooler waters alone do not attract bass and stripers to shallower water. Fish are also photosensitive. That means they react to the daily decline of daylight in the fall. Shorter days tell them that winter is on the way – a time when baitfish become scarce and meals do likewise. The metabolisms of our target species will slow in the winter to allow them to survive for days at a time with no food. But to prepare for that period, our predatory fish need to fatten up. Indeed, they go on feeding frenzies in the fall for that very purpose.



Bass will become very aggressive striking topwater flies and streamers with abandon as they gorge on frogs and snakes and any food source that swims on or near the surface. Stripers also have a smorgasbord waiting for them in Chesapeake tributaries. Bunker, also known as menhaden, are a fish whose sole purpose in life is to be eaten by bigger fish – as opposed to being captured by the Omega trawlers in the southern Chesapeake. Their true *raison-d-etre* is to provide sustenance for predators as a keystone component of the food chain.

And in the fall another miracle of nature happens in the Chesapeake. Bunker school up and leave the Bay's tributaries which have served as their nurseries for the year. Their destination is the Atlantic Ocean. But to get there, they must sacrifice multitudes of their brethren to ravenous stripers whose desire for cooler waters and easily earned calories has directed them to the very tributaries that the bunker are vacating. It's a head-on collision perfectly timed by nature, predator meeting prey. It's fortuitous for stripers, not so much for the bunker but essential for the ecosystem of the Chesapeake Bay.



So, for kayaker anglers the fall is a great time to fish for bass and stripers. Both species are frantically eating to prepare for the pending winter. Bass will be in or near remnants of lily pads and spatterdock or along shorelines. Stripers will be in the rivers and creeks of the Chesapeake. Fly rod poppers and streamers will attract both species throughout the season.

I recall a November afternoon where a friend and I were kayak fishing in Mill Creek off of Whitehall Bay near Annapolis. We found a school of chunky stripers feasting on bunker at the very back of the creek. Each one we caught spit up bits and pieces of bunker as we removed our hooks. Further, unlike the summer stripers we typically catch in Whitehall Bay, these stripers were fat. Summer stripers have flat bellies. The waistlines of fall stripers clearly show evidence of their glutinous feeding sprees. We referred to our catches that day as footballs because of their rounded physiques.

What made the above outing even more interesting is that a boat was docked within sight of

us as we were effortlessly catching these willing fish. Several gentlemen were loading the boat with rods and coolers as they prepared to head out to the larger Bay for stripers. I heard one who was watching us suggest to his cohorts that perhaps they should "stay put" and fish in the creek. They didn't. They pulled out. My buddy and I shrugged our shoulders at their decision and continued to catch the fish they left behind.

So, before you put your kayak on its rack for the final time this year, consider fall outings. Indeed, I do not venture as far in the Bay in the fall as I do in summer. I stay closer to shore in wind-protected creeks or I fish in small millponds. I factor in the weather judiciously and launch only when the forecast indicates conditions will be safe. And rarely do I fish alone.



The good news is that the above precautions do not limit my fishing success in the slightest.

That's because the fish I am pursuing have headed to the same waters I seek in the fall -- shallow waters that are ideal for fly fishing. I don't have to go far to find them. You won't either. Think about that the next time you book a fall Bay charter or see a boat with anglers speeding through a creek inlet on its way to the Bay Bridge and beyond. I see them all the time leaving their wakes as they depart the tidal creeks where I am kayak fishing in the fall. When I do, I wonder how many fish they have passed on their way to their favorite spots and how much gas at exorbitant marina prices their boats are guzzling. Then I pick up my paddle and move to another nearby spot and catch more fish.

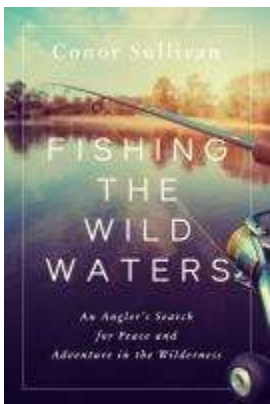
Featured Article: Book Review

Fishing the Wild Waters: An Angler's Search for Peace and Adventure in the Wilderness

Connor Sullivan

By Mark Bange

Fishing the Wild Waters highlights the angling experiences of Connor Sullivan, the son of a career U.S. Coast Guard Officer who followed in his father's footsteps to become a Coast Guard officer himself. The Coast Guard connection is important because as a boy Connor lived in various coastal communities around the United States as his dad progressed to become an Admiral in the Service. Then Connor did the same during his own Coast Guard career, becoming an officer himself. It was while living in those communities that Connor garnered his love of fishing. In this book, Sullivan highlights his fishing experiences in three distinct areas: New England, Alaska and Hawaii.



Sullivan is not just an avid fisherman, he is a "big fish" angler. That includes huge tuna off the coast of New England, cow stripers in the pre-dawn surf of New Hampshire on his hand-carved wooden poppers and 40-pound codfish caught by jigging on Stellwagen Bank, south of Gloucester. In

Hawaii, he chased mahi-mahi and marlin with hand-made resin trolling lures, landing a 611-pound marlin. Alaska, Kodiak Island to be exact, offers a great salmon fishery, in which he excelled on the fly. He also describes catching Alaskan halibut.

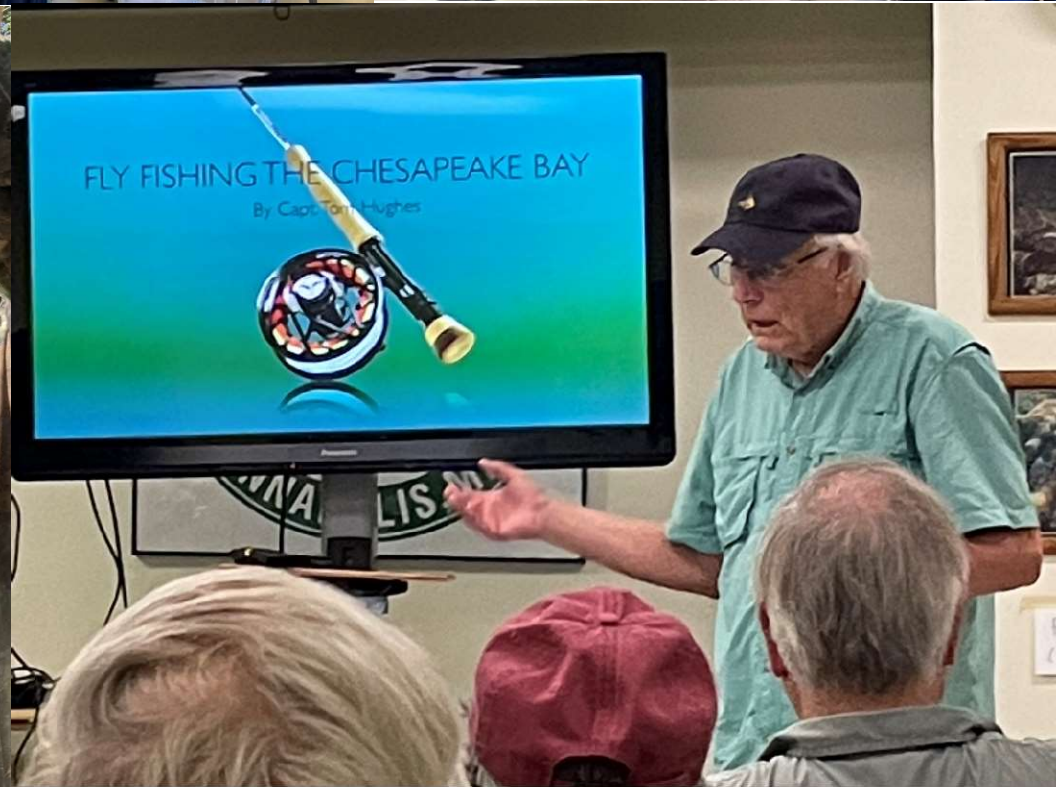
The book is organized into chapters for each of the areas mentioned above. It serves not only as a fishing guide of sorts but as a travelog with insights about local customs and histories. For example, Sullivan describes the historic importance of codfish to New England. He discusses the codfish

crash and efforts to bring the fishery back. In Hawaii, he heaps praise on native anglers who brave ever turbulent ocean waters to find fish while trolling in waters that are 3,000 deep feet only a few miles from shore. But clearly, he has a special affinity for Alaska. I learned that Kodiak Island has five distinct salmon runs up its rivers: chinook, coho, sockeye, chum, and pink. Sullivan caught them all on the fly, the only species in the book he mentioned as a fly-fishing pursuit. Of course, he has photos in the book of bears doing their own style of salmon fishing at the same time humans are casting flies for them. And he talks of his close encounters with those furry anglers. Then in a real change of pace from wading rivers for salmon and avoiding hungry bears, Sullivan describes trying to raise a 50-pound halibut to the deck of a boat. That's actually a small halibut, called "a chicken" by locals because it is a good size for eating. Halibut can exceed over 100 pounds.

I enjoyed reading each of the above chapters because I have never caught any of the fish he mentioned other than stripers -- and I have never caught one of them from the surf. From that aspect the book was enlightening to me. In fact, after the three main chapters, Sullivan included detailed appendices where he covered precise fishing methods for each of the species to include gear, techniques and locations. Other appendices include: Becoming a Fisherman (The importance of spending time on the water.); Fly-fishing (The aesthetic joys of the technique that we as FSFF members can well appreciate.); How to Care for Your Catch (Preparing your fish for the freezer should you keep them.)

Fishing the Wild Waters is well written. It's to the point, and pleasantly descriptive with no extraneous verbiage as you would expect from its military officer author. It's also a fast read at only 226 pages. Yet it is remarkably full of information. I highly recommend it. It's available at the Anne Arundel County Library or via online book sellers. 2021 Pegasus Books, New York, NY







An Invitation From

Free State Fly Fishers

to join us at our

Holiday Dinner on December 7th, 2022 at Mike's Crab House on the South River at the Riva Road Bridge

Cash Bar at 6:00 pm

Dinner service to begin at 6:30 pm

For more information contact on Don Vance at 443-875-5100 or donaldevance@gmail.com

Cost: \$45.00 per person except for \$53.00 for Broiled Crab Cakes

Make checks payable to Free State Fly Fishers and mail with the following information to:

William H. Smith
6 Gladden Road
Annapolis, MD 21401

Checks **must** be received by **November 25th**
Payment cannot be accepted at the event

Name: _____

Entrée choice (see next page): _____

Total number of tickets: _____ Amount enclosed: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Names of other guests in your party (Please include their first names): _____

_____ and their entrée choices _____

FSFF DECEMBER 7th 2022
HOLIDAY DINNER AT
MIKE'S RESTAURANT & CRABHOUSE
3030 Old Riva Road – Riva, MD 21140
410-956-2784

GROUP DINNER ENTRÉE SELECTION
\$45.00* PER PERSON

SERVED IN THE MAIN DINING ROOM

CHOICE OF ONE ENTRÉE

- BROILED CRAB CAKE PLATTER--\$53.00 PER PERSON
- STUFFED FLOUNDER
- 13 OZ NEW YORK STRIP
- BROILED SALMON
- SEAFOOD IMPERIAL
- BEEF OR CHICKEN KABOB

Please let us know as soon as possible of special Dietary Needs in advance.

ALL ENTRÉES SERVED WITH:

- SIDE SALAD
- POTATAO
- ROLLS & BUTTER
- COFFEE, TEA, AND SODA

* Except if you are ordering the broiled crab cake, then the cost is \$53.00 per person.



Free State Fly Fishers, Inc. Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims, Express Assumption of Risk, and Indemnity Agreement

Read carefully before signing

IN CONSIDERATION of being permitted to participate in the fly fishing and other activities (“Activities”) sponsored by the Free State Fly Fishers, Inc. (“FSFF”), I, for myself, my personal representatives, assigns, heirs, and next of kin, do hereby acknowledge and agree to the terms and conditions in this agreement (this “Agreement”). I understand that the inherent hazards and risks associated with participating in FSFF Activities, the movement of equipment related to the Activities, as well as travel to and from the Activity sites is potentially dangerous and physically demanding and hazardous. I am mentally and physically sufficiently fit to participate in such Activities. If at any time I believe the conditions to be unsafe, I will immediately discontinue further participation, and assume all risks inherent in my decision to do so. I understand that the Activities are dangerous and involve the risk of serious injury and/or death and/or property damage; any injuries may be compounded by negligent emergency response of FSFF; I am voluntarily participating in the Activities with knowledge of these dangers involved; and I agree to accept and assume any and all risks of injury, death, or property damage, whether caused by the negligence of FSFF or otherwise.

I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I expressly waive and release any and all claims, now hereafter known, against FSFF and its officers, directors, employees, agents, affiliates, successors, and assigns (collectively, “Releasees”), on account of injury, death, or property damage arising out of or attributable to my participation in the Activity, whether arising out of the negligence of the Releasees or otherwise. I covenant not to make or bring any such claim against the Releasees, and forever release and discharge the Releasees from liability under such claims.
2. I will wear and properly use all of the appropriate protective and safety equipment. However, I am aware and understand that protective gear cannot guarantee the participant’s safety and gear.
3. I acknowledge that FSFF volunteers who lead FSFF Activities, outings, trips, or workshops are not professional leaders, guides or instructors, nor are they certified by an organization requiring certain skills or knowledge of safety practices. I am at all times fully and solely responsible for my own safety and well-being during trips, classes, courses and events involving fly fishing and related Activities conducted under the auspices, sponsorship or leadership of FSFF, its officers, agents and members, as well as in transit to and from such activities, and that I must consider and evaluate my ability to handle the conditions present at all times.
4. In the event that I am injured during an event, trip, workshop and/or other Activity of FSFF, I give permission for other participants to administer first aid and to seek medical assistance as deemed

necessary. I intend that the releases, waivers, indemnity agreements, and assumptions of risk contained in this agreement shall fully apply to any claim whatsoever on account of first aid treatment or service rendered to me during my participation in FSFF Activities, even if caused by the negligence of releasees or others.

I hereby release, covenant not to sue, save and hold harmless, and agree to promptly indemnify FSFF, its officers, directors, coordinators, outing leaders and other volunteers (“the releasees”), from liability and responsibility whatsoever for any and all liability, claims, demands, losses, injuries, damage to property, causes of action or other damages, including but not limited to the costs of litigation and attorneys' fees, that I, my estate, heirs, survivors, executors, or assigns may have for any and all personal injury, disability, property damage, wrongful death, and/or other losses, damage, and/or claims arising out of or resulting from or in connection with the Activities, whether caused by active or passive negligence of the releasees or otherwise.

This Agreement is the sole and entire agreement of FSFF and me regarding the Activity and supersedes all prior and contemporaneous understandings, agreements, representations, and warranties, both written and oral regarding the Activity. If any part of this Agreement is invalid, illegal, or unenforceable, that shall not affect any other part of this Agreement. This Agreement is binding on and shall inure to the benefit of the Releasees and me and is made pursuant to and shall be governed by the laws of Maryland, without giving effect to any principles of conflict of laws. Any claim or cause of action arising under this Agreement shall be brought in the District Court of Maryland for Anne Arundel County or the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County, Maryland and I hereby consent to the jurisdiction and venue therein.

I have carefully read this agreement, have been given the opportunity to review it by counsel of my choosing, and fully understand its contents. I am aware that this is a release and waiver of liability to all releasees and that by signing this agreement I am giving up important legal rights.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Signed on Behalf of _____ (Print Name of Minor), as that Child’s Parent or Legal Guardian

FREE STATE FLY FISHERS 2022 LEADERSHIP TEAM

President: [Gary Grey](#)

First Vice-President: [Duber Winters](#)

Second Vice President: [Luis Santiago](#)

Secretary: [Frank Bowne](#)

Treasurer: [Bill Smith](#)

Directors: [Rich Batiuk](#) (Past President) / [Mike Mattia](#)

FSFF Coordinators:

Clubhouse Coordinator: [John Rentch](#)

DFRC Representative: [Mike Mattia](#)

Club Librarian: Vacant

Chesapeake Council – FFI Delegate: [Frank Bowne](#)

Membership Coordinator: [Frank Bowne](#)

Social Media Coordinator: [Adam Bange](#)

Webmasters: [Luis Santiago](#) / [Frank Bowne](#)

Outings Coordinator: [Duber Winters](#)

Pond-of-the-Month Outings Coordinator: [Mike Mattia](#)

Biggest Bluegill/Pickereel Tournaments Coordinator: [Mark Bange](#)

Meeting Speakers Coordinator: [Gary Grey](#)

Fly Casting Clinics Coordinator: [Tim Ruthemeyer](#)

Fly Tying/Fly Swap Coordinator: [Luis Santiago](#)

Beer Ties Coordinator: [Frank Bowne](#)

Saturday Hands-on Sessions Coordinator: [Rich Batiuk](#)

Streamside 101 Fly Fishing Classes Coordinator: [Rich Batiuk](#)

Swap Meet Coordinators: [Rich Batiuk](#) / [Mark Bange](#)

Movie Night Coordinator: Vacant

Holiday Dinner Coordinator/Raffle Prize Coordinator: [Don Vance](#) / [Jack Prouty](#)

Publicity Coordinator: [Ryan Harvey](#)

Raffles Coordinators: [Bob Ruck](#) / [Mike Mattia](#)

Door Prizes Coordinator: [Joe DeMeo](#)

Newsletter Editor: [Rich Batiuk](#)

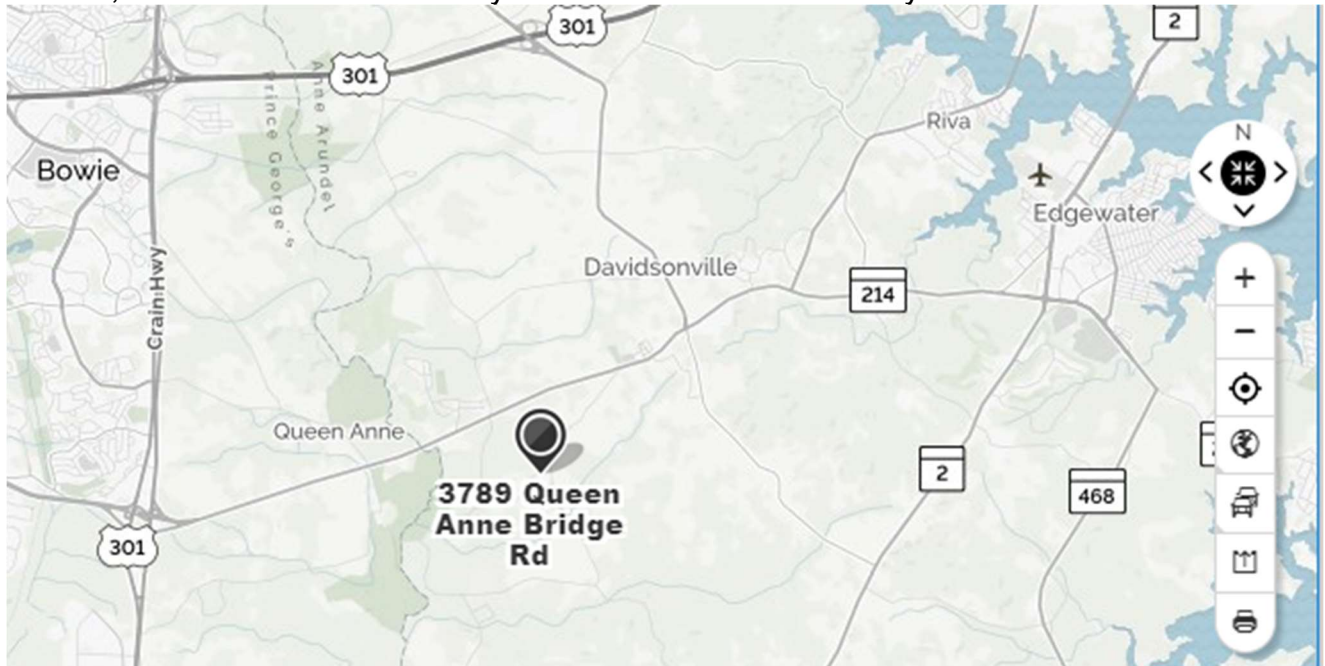
Please contact the appropriate FSFF leadership team member to get answers to any questions about Free State Fly Fishers and upcoming club sponsored events.

“Fellowship Through Fly Fishing”



Directions to the FSFF Clubhouse

Free State Fly Fishers (FSFF) meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month, September through June (except December), starting at 7:00 PM, at our **clubhouse** located at 3789 Queen Anne Bridge Rd., Davidsonville, MD 21035. The club house is on the grounds of the Davidsonville Family Recreation Center, an Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks facility.



Directions: From Route 50, take Exit 16 to Route 424/ Davidsonville Road South. At the second traffic light, take a right turn onto Route 214/Central Avenue West and then take a left turn on Queen Anne Bridge Road. Take a left-hand turn into the Davidsonville Family Recreation Center through the open gate. Walk along the

parking lot and around and past Ford Hall to the clubhouse using the above map.

Our Website: <http://fs-ff.com/>

Our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/FSFFMD/>

Email Us: fsffmd@gmail.com