



FREE STATE FLY FISHERS NEWSLETTER

Fall 2023

President's Message: This fall, fly fish with a friend

As a fly fisher looking forward to another seasonal change, I get excited about the destinations that I will be traveling to, the species of fish that I will be chasing and sharing time with the people that I will be fishing with. It seems to me as time passes it is less important to me as where, when and what as it is about who. One interesting dynamic that comes to light when thinking about this is that typically when I go fishing with others we are rarely side by side and having in depth conversations. This reality is even magnified more so when we are fishing from kayaks or SUPs as we all seem to go our own way after launching the boats and then maybe reconnect for lunch or back at the ramp later in the day.

That said it has always been my inclination to go fishing *with* someone as opposed to just going myself. Of course this can be different for all of us but I distinctly remember fishing the Susquehanna river back in the 1980's and having incredible days of catching smallmouth bass both in great numbers and good size and immediately thinking that I need to share this joy with others. This thinking is likely what encouraged me to be a fishing guide. I was never one to worry about other anglers fishing "my spot" or catching "my fish" as I believe that neither of those statements are true. Fish move in and out of selected areas based on many different factors and while certain spots can often be reliable there will no doubt be times when an area fishes better than others. And besides who cares? Fish 'em if you got 'em I always say.

I have mentioned before that I joined Free State Fly Fishers with hopes of sharing my love of the sport and accumulated knowledge that came from working in the industry. Most importantly however I joined

this club to connect with others that share a common interest so that we can all benefit from another's knowledge and experiences. Needless to say I am overwhelmingly impressed with the connections that I have made and the fun that I have had in doing so.

During the second week of October I look forward to going on a now annual tradition of what has become known as The Family Fish and Camp Trip. This is done with neighbors, old friends, new friends, nieces, nephews, grand nieces and nephews etc. It is a lot of



work but so much fun and I now cherish each and every trip mostly for the memories that created. I would have none of that if I were to be fishing alone. Recently fellow club members Ed Walerszak and Bill Smith connected for what appeared to be an amazing trip to

fish brook trout in Maine. I reached out to Ed and asked if he had known Bill prior or if they met through FSFF... Here is Ed's response: "Just connected thru the club as I have done with others. Great portal for meeting folks with passion for fly fishing and the advancement of high ethical standards for the preservation of sport fishing . And this my friends is what we refer to as fellowship through fly fishing.

So Let's fish (with someone)!

Duber

Duber Winters
2023 Free State Fly Fishers President

FSFF Sponsored Meetings, Events and Activities

Fall weather is upon us and, therefore, our plans for where to fish and what to fish for have changed from summertime. But this also means our club is back in fulltime action sponsoring club meetings, Saturday morning fly tying sessions and Saturday morning hands-on sessions every month not to mention holiday dinners, fly casting clinics, the spring swap meeting, the spring fly swap and outings.

Just remember, any time, day or night, you can find out what the club has to offer you as members via our club website's events page at <https://fsff.com/index.php/events-2/>. Mark your calendars and come out and join your fellow members. Better yet, subscribe to the club's events so that they automatically appear in your smartphone's calendar. See instructions below.

Wednesday Club Meeting Presentations



Here's our current club meeting schedule from November through May with our June meeting being devoted to a casting clinic complete with dinner. Meetings are 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM in the club house at 3789 Queen Anne Bridge Road Davidsonville, MD 21035. Thanks to Gary Grey, our Meeting Speaker Coordinator, for lining up this excellent array of speakers, thanks to Ryan Harvey for working to get announcements about our

upcoming meetings in local and regional newspapers and other publications, and thanks to Frank Bowne for updating the club website's calendar with information on these and all other club sponsored events.



November 1: Mark Bange, John Rentch, Larry Oakley, and Mike Mattia, all FSFF members, will present a talk titled "A virtual fly fishing tour of Delaware and Maryland Eastern Shore ponds". This will provide the newcomer with everything needed to fish these ponds except for the kayak/canoe!

January 3: Joseph Evans: Joe, a fellow FSFF member, will talk about "Gear and strategies for fly fishing the Chesapeake Bay". At present, Joe is the only Orvis Endorsed fishing guide on the Chesapeake Bay. He has also worked as a regional sales manager for Orvis, promotions manager for Bass Pro Shops, founding editor of PropTalk Magazine, information officer at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Service, and Editor in Chief of Chesapeake Bay Magazine.

February 7: Walleye Pete: Walleye Pete is a light tackle fishing guide on the Chesapeake Bay, specializing in fishing the Tangier Sound area of the Chesapeake Bay for Striped Bass and Specs.

March 6: Luis Santiago and Gary Grey, both FSFF members, will present on "Budget friendly Northern Pike and Smallmouth Bass fishing in Ontario, Canada and the Adirondacks, New York". They will share their experiences during club



sponsored and club member organized trips to both of these fish filled locations.

April 3: Mike Slepesky: Mike is a fly fishing guide from the Tightlining MD Guide Service. He specialized in fly fishing for trout in the Central Maryland Area and his presentation will discuss several local streams suitable for fly fishing for trout.

May 1: Rich Batiuk, a FSFF member, will present on “The New [Maryland’s Fly Fishing Trail](#)”. Rich was one of the leaders in developing and creating Maryland’s Fly Fishing Trail and will make a presentation covering the entire aspect of this project including, “Get out there and fish it”!

If you have ideas for club meeting speakers or would be willing to present to your fellow club members, please reach out to me at garygrey74@gmail.com.

Gary Grey, FSFF Meeting Speaker Coordinator

Saturday Morning Fly Tying Sessions

The club’s first Saturday of the month club member-led fly tying sessions are scheduled all the way through April this year. Come join your fellow club members starting at 10 AM at the clubhouse at 3789 Queen Anne Bridge Road Davidsonville, MD 21035 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. For most sessions, materials will be provided.

New to fly tying? You have come to the right place as each fly tying session is geared towards teaching fly tyers of all experience levels how to tie each pattern. And there is tying equipment available for use by anyone participating in these member-led sessions including fly tying vises, thanks to Luis Santiago as well as assorted fly tying material in the back storage room available for use by everyone.



November 4: Joe Bruce will demonstrate how to tie Bruce’s Baby Largemouth Bass and Bruce’s Baby Smallmouth Bass flies

December 2: Michael Vlaikov will teach how to tie a jointed streamer and a large baitfish fly for stripers and pickerel.

January 6: Joe Bruce.

February 3: Luis Santiago will lead the fly tying session focused on tying his Lost Lake favorite bass flies: foam popper and Olive Peanut Envy.

March 2: Mark Bange will walk fellow fly tyers through the steps for tying several of his favorite bluegill flies.



April 6: Adam Bange will reveal his secrets to tying (more like creating!) spun deer hair flies so you don't want to miss this fly tying session.

Luis Santiago, FSFF Fly Tying Sessions Coordinator

Saturday Morning Hands-on Sessions

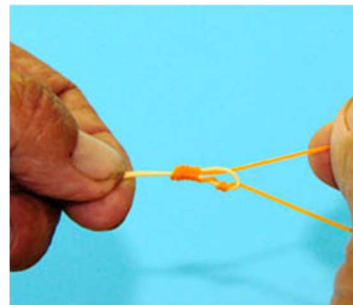
Thanks to our fellow club members' willingness to share their experiences, we have scheduled Saturday Hands-on Sessions from September through May covering an incredible array of topics. All Hands-on Sessions will be held on the third Saturday of the month at the clubhouse at 3789 Queen Anne Bridge Road Davidsonville, MD 21035 from 10 AM to 12 PM unless otherwise noted.



November 18: Duber Winter's "Planning for and Going on Fly Fishing Trips with Guides".



December 16: Rich Batiuk's "Organizing Your Fly Fishing Everything...Tackle, Books, Flies and Fly Tying Materials".



January 20: Joe Bruce and Duber Winters' "Tying Fishing Knots for Every Fly Fishing Situation".



February 17: Mark Bange's "Kayak Fishing in Local Waters" class 10 AM – 2 PM (includes group lunch).



March 16: Joe Bruce's "Everything You Need to Know About Fishing for Pickerel".

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

May 11: Joe Bruce's "Using Different Fish Catching Retrieves with Your Fly Rod" (everyone should bring a fly rod with reel and line to practice the retrieves).

The club website's calendar of events will also include one page flyers on each session with descriptions of the session and any additional logistics information you will need to join your fellow club members.

Rich Batiuk, FSFF Saturday Hands-on Session Coordinator



Casting Clinics

The next casting clinic is scheduled for **Thursday, October 26** on the lawn behind the clubhouse at 3789 Queen Anne Bridge Road Davidsonville, MD 21035. Our fly casting clinic instructors will be Duber Winters, Mark Bange and Joe Bruce.

Please bring your own fly rod, complete with a leader on the end of your fly line. If you don't have a fly rod, the Club has some you can use.

Tim Ruthemeyer, FSFF Casting Clinic Coordinator

Wednesday Night Beer Ties

Thanks to Frank Bowne, we're continuing another long held club tradition...Beer Ties at the Killarney House located at 584 W Central Avenue 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.

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

- October 25th
- December 27th
- February 28th
- April 24th
- June 26th
- August 28rd



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.

June 21-25, 2024 Adirondacks NY Outing: For you long-term planners in the club, next year's Club Adirondacks trip will be June 21-25, 2024. Block those dates out on your calendar now! More details to be provided later by Gary Grey, the outing coordinator for this club sponsored trip.



Club Holiday Party

Mark your calendars for our upcoming annual holiday party scheduled for **Wednesday, December 6** from 6-8 PM at Mike's Crab House located at 3030 Riva Road Riva, MD.



Don Vance, FSFF Holiday Party Coordinator

Carpooling to Winter and Spring Fly Fishing Shows

We are fast approaching fly fishing shows season, so be sure and sign up at an upcoming club meeting, fly tying session or Saturday Hands-on session. The club will be sponsoring carpooling to the following fly fishing shows:

Edison, NJ Fly Fishing Show on **Friday, January 26, 2024**

Lancaster, PA Fly Fishing Show on **Saturday, March 2, 2024**



Once you sign up, you will receive emails with all the logistics information including where to meet the morning of

the fly fishing show(s) you have signed up for.

Rich Batiuk, FSFF Fly Fishing Shows Carpooling Coordinator

Stream-side Fly Fishing 101 Classes

Here's your opportunity for hands-on fly fishing instruction on the water thanks to your fellow club members. Our next fly fishing 101 class is scheduled for **March 11, 2024** from 8 – 11 AM on Catoctin Creek. More details will be shared along with circulation of a sign-up sheet at upcoming club meetings.

Duber Winters, FSFF Stream-side Fly Fishing 101 Coordinator



Club News

2023 Biggest (and Smallest) Bluegill Contest

We are well into the club's 2023 Biggest (and Smallest!) Bluegill Tournament which officially opened on Saturday April 1, 2023. You can find the current rules for the 2023 Biggest Bluegill Contest on the club's website at: <https://fsff.com/index.php/bluegill-tournament-2023/>.

The leader board is filled with bluegills ranging from 10 inches to 2.5 inches, with entries from North and South Carolina up to West Virginia, Maryland and Delaware! Here's the Biggest (and Smallest) Bluegill Contest standings as of July 11, 2023:

Largest Bluegill

First – Larry Oakey, 10-inches, 7/11/23, Biltmore Estate, Ashville, NC, Blue popper



Second – Amy Holstein, 10 inches, 8/2/23, Private Pond, Enoree, SC Golden Retriever (tied by Joe DeMeo!)

Third – Pat Brophy, 9.5 inches, 6/3/23, Alpine Lake, Terra Alta, WV, Hopper

Fourth – Mike Nichols, 9.5-inches, 7/5/23, Private Pond, Kent County, MD, Blue popper

Fifth – Rich Batiuk, 9.375-inches, 5/12/23 Ingrams Pond, Millsboro, DE, Yellow girdle bug

Sixth – Randy Wolf, 9.375-inches, 5/29/23. Private Pond, Henderson, MD, Black foam spider

Seventh – Andy Grosko, 9.125 inches, 4/25/23, Blairs Pond, Milford, DE, Black half Clouser half wooly bugger

Eighth – John Rentch, 9-inches, 4/20/23, Blairs Pond, Milford, DE, Black wooly bugger

Ninth – John Keough, 9-inches, 7/29/2023, Wagamon's Pond, DE, Black foam beetle

Tenth – Mike Mattia, 8.5-inches, 4/29/23, Private Pond, Cheltenham, MD, Green hornet

Eleventh – Frank Bowne, 7-inches, 5/20/23, Trap Pond, Laurel, DE, Blue foam fly

Smallest Bluegill

First – Andy Grosko, 2.5 inches, 6/25/23, Upper Patapsco River, Sykesville, MD, Bead head nymph



Second Pat Brophy, 3.5-inches, 6/3/23, Alpine Lake, Terra Alta, WV, Hopper

Third – Amy Holstein, 4.125-inches, 5/15/23, Private Pond, Mt. Airy, MD, Black foam beetle

Fourth -- Rich Batiuk, 5-inches, 5/18/23, Trussum Pond, Laurel, DE, "It's a Bug, Bluegill" fly

Fifth-- Ryan Harvey, 5.25-inches 5/20/23, Trap Pond, Laurel, DE, Black and blue chartreuse gurgler

Sixth -- Rich Galena, 6.5-inches, 4/27/23, Arundel Golf Park, Glen Burnie, MD, Gaines Sneaky Pete Slider

You still have time prior to the close of the tournament on November 15th to knock Larry out of first place with the bluegill he caught in a royal estate pond! And let's not enable Andy to lay claim to a second year winning streak for the smallest bluegill—time to go really small with your favorite bluegill fly!



Mark Bange, FSFF
Bluegill Contest
Coordinator

Club Waterproof Stickers and Business Cards

Thanks to Frank Bowne, the club is now selling club logo waterproof stickers (\$2), perfect additions for your fishing kayaks, canoes, boats and



paddleboards! In addition, Frank had new club business cards printed for use by club members to hand out to other fly fishers on the stream or pondside or people expressing an interest in fly fishing. Each card provides the club's website and other information about the club. Pick up a set of these club business cards the next time you are at the clubhouse.



Interested in Another Fly Rod Building Class?

John Keough taught the club's first fly rod building class this past January and February. The resultant fly rods built by the class members were truly incredible! In just two to three classes, John worked the class participants through all the steps in building their own fly rods.

John has offered to teach future fly rod building classes for our fellow members if there is enough interest. Providing a menu of options for the rod blanks as well as fly rod building materials and equipment, John orders everything for the fly rod building class participants.

If you are interested in participating in another fly rod building class, please sign up at the upcoming November or January club meetings. Given enough participants, John will schedule the next rod building class for this coming winter.

We Lost Another Long Time Free State Fly Fisher

Denis LaCroix passed away this past September. A member of Free State Fly Fishers for decades, Denis served the club in many capacities, including as Club President. Linda and the rest of Denis's family are in our thought and prayers.



Rod Holders Installed in Back of Clubhouse

Thanks to John Rentch, club members now have a series of rod holders installed on the backside of the clubhouse next to the back door for holding rods during the club's casting clinics hosted several times each year on the back lawn. What an incredible clubhouse we are so fortunate to have for our club!

Clubhouse Floors Are Once Again Spotless!



Thanks to our fearless floor cleaning crew, our clubhouse floors are shining and almost clean enough to eat off of! Thanks goes to Bill Smith and John Rentch for helping keep our clubhouse ready for another busy year of club sponsored meetings, events and activities.

Clubhouse Stage Floor Repaired

Actually if you look closely at the accompanying photo, we are talking complete replacement of part of the floor of the stage! Thanks goes out to Larry Oakey for providing the expert carpenter to make our stage floor safe to walk on and a place to store our folding tables. And thanks (once again) to John Rentch for organizing the repairs between club sponsored events at the clubhouse.



Sign Up for Duberfly Trout School

This year, Duber Winters is offering two dates, March 23 and April 13 2024, for club members to sign up and participate in Duberfly Trout School. This comprehensive, on the water, interactive program offers trout fishing basics to the beginner as well as technical techniques and information for the seasoned angler. Presentations on streamer, dry fly and nymph fishing as well as on stream entomology basics are included. Guided fishing on premium private trout water accompanies instruction with a focus on reading water, fly



selection, knots and proper catch and release techniques. Morning coffee, and lunch are provided. Trout School is located at Double Spur Outfitters Star in Tannery, Virginia from 7:30 AM-3:00 PM both days at a cost \$250.

Club members can contact Duber directly via email at Duberfly@gmail.com to sign up or sign up at an upcoming club meeting. And members are welcome to sign up for both dates.



Fly Fishing Shows are Back!!

Tis the season for fly fishing shows...well, coming up in several months. Here's three shows in our region. The largest is up in Edison, NJ Fly Fishing Show on Friday, January 26, 2024 followed by the Lancaster, PA Fly Fishing Show on Saturday, March 2, 2024. As seen on page 6, the club is providing for carpooling opportunities to both shows.

And then even closer to our clubhouse, there is the Maryland Fly Fishing and Collectible Tackle Show.

As always, the show's primary objective is to shine a spotlight on the exceptional independent vendors who offer top-notch fly-fishing products and services. If you have been a part of previous shows, you know that their vendors are true craftsmen. From bamboo, glass, and graphite rod makers to dealers of classic collectible tackle, specialty fly-fishing products, local and regional fly shops, gifted fly tyers, artists, and expert guides spanning the east coast, our event celebrates the best in the business.

The show will take place on Saturday, March 23, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the West Village Commons, 424 Emerson Drive, Towson, MD.



More Free Fly Fishing Books Available at the Clubhouse

Free fly fishing books? Absolutely! Starting with the September club meeting, club members have been helping themselves to over a hundred different books covering an incredible array of fly fishing topics. All these books have been donated by club members of the past several years to sell at the club's Spring Swap meets. To make some room in our back storage room at the clubhouse, these remaining unsold books are now available AT NO COST to club members. So please give some fly fishing books a good home. Any remaining books after the November club meeting will be donated to BIG International Rotary in Annapolis to support their shipment of books overseas to students.

Reminder: FSFF Calendar Subscription for Your Smartphone!

Once you are a paid member and you join the club Email Group, you can get all club events to show up in your smartphone calendar in real time automatically. Follow these simple steps (this example is for Apple iOS but should be similar for Android):

Open the smartphone's Calendar app

Tap on Calendars

Add Calendar

Add Subscription Calendar

Subscription URL: <https://FS->

[FF.groups.io/g/main/ics/1859633/911902081/feed.ics](https://FS-FF.groups.io/g/main/ics/1859633/911902081/feed.ics)

Name: FSFF Group (or any name of your choice)

How to Catch More Fish: The Importance of Timing on Lakes and Tidal Water

By Joe Bruce

This can be a broad subject, especially around the Chesapeake Bay where we can fish cold, fresh, and saltwater. I always wanted to do all three one day, haven't yet, but I might down the road.

Let me clear up something. Some fishermen think, fish, like us, don't eat all day. In the colder months, they might only eat an hour or two a day. As it warms, they eat more frequently as their metabolism increases. But it is not all day.

Time spent on the water will give a fisherman the ideal times fishing will be productive. This can be for any predator fish, it doesn't matter if they are stripers, snakeheads, chain pickerel or large or smallmouth bass there is a best time to be on the water.

Starting out fishermen feel they need to be on the water at dawn and fish into the dark to be successful. This I would say is never the case. As we gain experience, we plan our trips around the best times to fish.

It could be in the morning, if the tides are right or maybe temperature could be the reason to be there at the stroke of dawn. There are many reasons to choose the time of day. Knowing the water and time spent will govern the most productive times.

During the warmer months, I fish for bass, carp, and snakeheads. I enjoy fishing for bass in lily pads from April to sometime in June until the pad fields have exceeded their "expiration date." This is when the pads interlock and the fish are there, but they can't bust through the pads to get my offering.

I enjoy carp fishing the whole time during warmer weather changing pace from bass to carp and in the later months, snakeheads. Even carping in the tidal water is governed by the tides. I fish areas with huge grass flats. The carp are all over this foot-deep water but won't bite until the tide starts out. At this point, the carp need to pull off the flats and slide into the nearby channel. The fishing can be very good.

In tidal water, timing is most important. An example of the best times to be on the water happened during my last three snakehead trips. As stated at the beginning, this is a broad subject that encompasses too many conditions that could never be covered in writing. Everybody's experience is different.

I have found through the years that timing is critical for productive snakeheading. It is usually based on the development of the grass beds or pad fields they live in. In the early spring, productive times are longer because the grass has just started to come off the bottom. This growth is fast and, in a week, or so, can be on the near or on the surface.

I was fishing a Potomac Tributary where the best time to fish is the first couple of hours of the outgoing tide. The area I find most productive is in the spatterdock field while the leaves are on the

water. Depending on grass growth I feel three hours on the outgoing tide is best. After that the grass is on the surface and the spatterdock is high out of the water and now, I am trying to fish through a forest.

The second body of water was in a Baltimore County Tributary. Again the best time to hit this body of water is also the first three hours of the outgoing tide for the same reason as the Potomac water, the grass. This water is best fished as the water recedes until the grass hits the surface. After that, the snakeheads are either buried in the grass or on the channel edges. The channel edge is fishable, but a lot of time needs to be spent on each fish.

Of course, there are many areas where the channel is best. Again, spending time on the water is important for a successful day.

The third area is again a tributary of the Potomac River, the best fishing is the last three hours of the outgoing tide and the first two hours of the incoming tide in the narrow channels between the shoreline reeds.

On high tide the snakeheads are back in the high weeds and grass and are not accessible until the water drops out of the reeds. At that time, they are concentrated on the edge of the channel grass line.

My point to all this is, learn the water and the conditions present in that body of water and you will find it isn't a dawn-to-dusk fishery. I am a fishing nut, but I like my time on the water to be productive in terms of my hours spent there.

Don't get me wrong, I love the sunrises and sunsets, but it is more rewarding if the timing happens to hit the right tides for the area.



Places to Fish— Two Eastern Shore River Access Points in Caroline County!

By James Andrews

By foot, kayak or small boat these two spots are easy to get to and hold some great wildlife, not to mention the fish!

Hillsboro Boat Access – Tuckahoe Creek (21929 Main Street, Denton, MD 21629)

A great place to fish from shore as well as by kayak or small boat. For shore access the park proper has the best fly-fishing access albeit a small area or just East before you cross over the bridge – which is better for worm dunkers – any attempted back cast here will end up pretty close to the road!

The kayak and boat launch are on the West side of the bridge with a small parking area. Boat users will need a permit (see Caroline County website for permit details: www.carolinemd.org/344/Boat-Ramps-Permit-Requirements) but without a trailer there is no fee for kayaks or shore-based anglers parking there.

This access is close to where the tidal section of the river ends. Head upstream for a flatwater section, then eventually a large wadable gravel bar where the tidal section of the river ends. I have spent hours at this one spot and, while hit or miss, it can be exceptional with many species found here – Largemouth Bass, Sunfish, White Perch, Stripped Bass, Pickerel, Yellow Perch and more.

As an added bonus, this gravel bar is chock full of old pottery and other interesting artifacts –

probably best to look and enjoy vs. a take anything home though.

The usual flies work well here – white/chartreuse Clousers, brown bead head woolly buggers and other small streamers are ideal. An intermediate line or at least a sink tip is your best bet to get away from the surface where the osprey take care of the fishing.

Upstream from here, depending on flow and how adventurous you are might be a short trip with the current picking up and occasional downed trees which are a hazard to be avoided in flow of any type.

From the boat launch heading downstream – it is more of a flatwater/tidal river section with snakehead and catfish added into the mix. I much prefer the upstream section though, so I'd check this section out if you have more time after the upstream section.



Greensboro Boat Ramp (224 E. Sunset Avenue, Greensboro, MD 21639)

A good amount of shore access is available at this park with a long accessible area to the shore bound

angler. Similar to Hillsboro, a permit is required for any trailered boat (same permit works for both launches including additional Caroline County facilities), but otherwise there is no charge.

Given launch provides access to the Choptank River means the same species and techniques come into play as described for the Hillsboro launch. Also similar to Hillsboro, head upstream until you reach trees blocking your way which are at/near the end of the tidal section of the river. Downstream is accessible for many miles and there is a lot of opportunity for some lightly fished waters that I have yet to explore beyond kayak range!

And when your done at Greensboro – stop by La Delizia Pizza just up the road – it’s a local favorite for me.



Featured Fly: San “Don Juan” Worm

By Bob O’Donnell

Hook: Curved Hook size 12-16 (Firehole Sticks 315 works well)

Thread: UTC 70 Denier – Red (or Pink, Tan, Brown)

Body: 1/8” leather or faux leather lace

Collar: UV Ice Dub – Pink (or other colors)

Head: Tying thread with Head cement, Sally Hansen’s Hard as Nails, or UV coating

Tying Instructions:

1. Start your thread on the hook shank behind the eye and take a few wraps rearward before snipping off.
2. Lay down a thread base taking touching wraps back to about the hook point or barb.
3. Measure a piece of leather lace so its approximately 3x the length of the hook shank. Trim it off on an angle so it forms a point on each end. (once you cut one segment you’re ready for the next fly)
4. Center the leather on top of the hook shank and then tie it in where your thread is hanging. Take several good wraps to lock the lace in place.
5. Pull the leather back and then take a pinch of UV Ice Dub and create a short dubbing noodle. Wrap the UV dubbing to create a short football shaped collar on the hook shank.
6. Pull the leather lace forward and over top of the UV collar and then secure it with several tight wraps, you should end up slightly behind the hook eye.
7. Advance your tying thread under the lace behind the hook eye and take a couple of wraps before doing a 4-5 turn whip finish and then snip your thread free.
8. Place a drop of head cement, Sally Hansen, or UV coating on each thread wrap to help ensure the thread wraps won’t come unraveled.

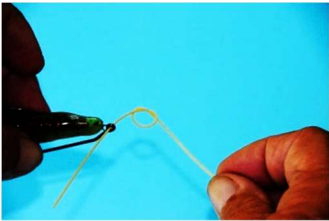
Notes: This is a variation of “The Infamous Pink Worm” by Pennsylvania angler, Fred Bridges. Trout and steelhead seem to find this fly sexy and just can’t resist it! I’m convinced the secret is a combination of the leather material and the UV collar. Resist the urge to make the length of the worm too long and you’ll avoid getting short strikes. When nothing else is working, this is my “go to” fly to save the day. Dead drift it along the bottom and hang on. The fish hit it hard. Try it in other colors and combinations of UV Ice Dub.

Fly Fishing Essentials: Knots – Part 4

By Joe Bruce and Duber Winters

Joe Bruce and The Homer Rhoads Knot

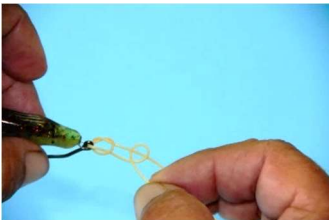
The Homer Rhodes knot is the best choice to form a loop knot in heavy material like a bite tippet and it can be untied to change lures or flies. Don't worry about the tag. And it can be untied and re-tied again and again.



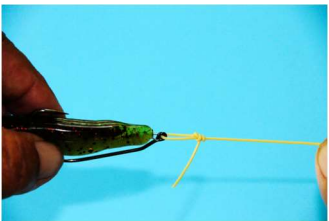
Pull about 6" of line and form an overhand knot, slide the tag end through the hook eye.



Pass the tag end through the loop. Make sure it is on the same side as the standing line.

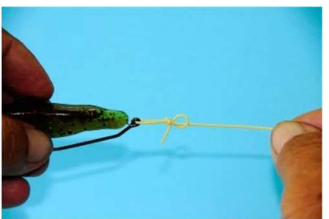


Pull the loop close to the hook eye and make an overhand knot around the standing line. Pull the overhand down to the loop and tighten.

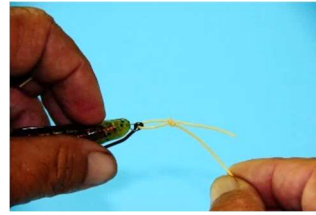


Cut the tag about an inch from the knot.

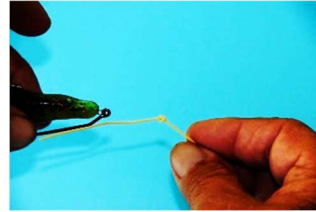
Untying the Homer Rhoads Knot



Push the tag loose from the loop and untie it.



Pull on the standing line and the slip knot will open up.

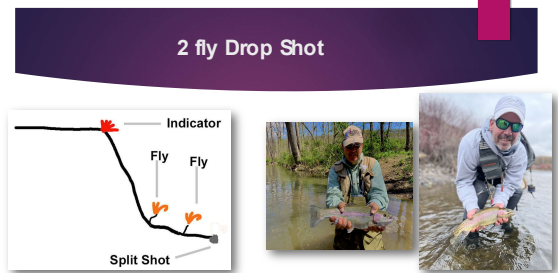


Tie on a new fly or lure and by slipping the tag through it and make the same overhand knot and tighten.

Retie your knots often for several reasons:

- Knots wear from movement and from pulling through debris.
- Knots wear from fighting fish.
- Hook eyes can be the problem.

Duber Winters and the Two Fly Drop Shot Knots



There are many different ways to a 2 fly drop shot rig. This setup is used exclusively for trout and is exceptionally effective because of where the flies end up on a drift, which is in the strike zone. The split shot ends up on the bottom of the rig which reduces opportunity for the flies to hang up on debris or structure. I have been tying it by tying on a piece of tippet to an existing leader, trimming off the upside tag end and then repeating the process. The downside tag end becomes the tie in point for the flies. I have also seen variations of the rig using tippet rings which also looks like an excellent way of tying the 2 fly drop shot. It can take a few extra minutes to tie this rig but there is no doubt it has proven itself over and over again as being highly effective.

Feature Article: Seven Up Time

By Mark Bange

No, I am not talking about the popular soft drink, although I do enjoy a cold can of that carbonated beverage in summer. For me, Seven Up Time means fall kayak fly fishing with 7-weight fly rods. It follows my reliance throughout the spring and summer on 5 and 6-weights as I targeted bluegills and bass in freshwater and white perch in tidal creeks. Fall is when I move to stouter 7-weight rods for pickerels and stripers.

My reasons for a bigger rod are due to my quest for larger fish in the fall. But other factors include my use of bigger flies and the areas where I cast them which are subjected to higher winds than where I fish in spring and summer. The extra “push” supplied by 7-weight fly line makes casting easier so that I can launch hundreds of casts on a kayak outing with no fatigue or shoulder discomfort. Let us look at a typical pickerel outing and then a striper outing to see how I employ my 7-weights. I always carry two rods. Storage of fly rods in a kayak can be problematic because space is a premium. I solve it by using Scotty Fly Rod holders which are attached to my milkcrate behind my seat. It is not ideal. I would prefer storage options with my rods in front of my seat. However, my kayaks are not configured to allow that. So, my flyrods trail outside the stern of my boats as you see in this photo.



I must be mindful that my rods are behind me as I traverse various waterways. My main concerns are overhanging branches from shoreline trees and pier and bridge pilings. After years of kayak angling, I do well in that endeavor. But indeed, storage low to my deck and contained within my kayak’s hull would be preferable.



I tie different flies on each rod. For example, when pickerel fishing, I will put an Articulated Crystal Buzzer on one line,

and a Bendback Minnow on the other, each tied on 2/0 hooks. Since neither fly is weighted, it does not matter which fly line receives which fly.



However, if my fly on the intermediate line gets more attention because it is riding a little deeper than my fly on the

floating line, I will add a ten-foot sink tip (loop to loop connection) to my floating line to get that fly deeper. Note, that a sink tip in tidal creeks is an especially effective approach for pickerels as fall progresses to winter and the water gets colder. It is not as effective in millponds because ponds are shallower than tidal creeks. Rarely, do I fish a sink tip in ponds.

I believe that depth, perhaps more than color or even the style of the streamer fly, is the most important factor for hooking pickerels. Finding

them in the water column is my first order of business. Hence my above approach. Some days, the fish are so aggressive that they will hit each of my streamers, regardless of which rod it is on. Those are good days. I will switch rods on a whim on those occasions, or I will fish one rod until the fly is destroyed by many pickerel bites. In any case, I believe having a choice of two rods at the ready increases my confidence as much as the number of fish I catch.

One other thing, in early fall and late spring I will sometimes start my pickerel outings with a popper on my floating line and a streamer on my intermediate line. Pickerels will come up for surface hits. (They may even do it in winter; however, I have never tried. I recall a cold January day when I cast a white Joe Bruce Bullet Head Darter in Concord Pond, Delaware. The fly was brand-new and had never been wet. A pickerel hit it on the surface before it could sink.) Maybe I should try poppers in winter too. But I know for certain that they work when the water is warmer in the early fall and late spring.



Now let us turn our attention to fall stripers. Again, I rely on 7-weight rods. I use the same approach as I described above – two rods in my kayak, one with floating line and one with intermediate. I even use the same streamer flies – Articulated Crystal Buggers and Bendback Minnows. I am more likely to add size 2/0 Clouser Minnows to the mix for



stripers because their weight can be helpful in finding the right depth in tidal currents.

The difference between casting for pickerels and stripers is where I fish. Generally, I will be in bigger waters, tidal of course, for stripers that are subject to higher winds. The 7-weight rod is helpful in those conditions. Examples would be the Severn River, the Magothy or the Patapsco. However, I will still be fishing relatively shallow water near structure and shorelines at the mouths of creeks. Points of land and riprap on a falling tide are my favorite striper targets. Also productive are areas where shallow water is close to deeper water. Note that I use no electronics in my kayak to find fish. But I can locate potential striper water by studying Navionics or other boating charts. I look for areas where there are drop offs near shallow water. I look for inlets to tidal ponds where the flow of water is compressed by a narrow channel. And I seek spots where tidal currents can flow freely past structure. My approach at Bodkin Point (and all tidal structure) is to allow my kayak to drift in the current past riprap or points while lofting casts toward target zones.

Finally, fall stripers are susceptible to topwater flies. Often, they can be seen breaking the water's surface as they ravage a school of menhaden. In fact, stripers frequently "boil" the water in fall 50 to 100 yards off Bodkin Point. I watch for flocks of hungry gulls crashing to the surface to eat the



residue of the carnage under the waves. Or I may even smell the oil wafting in the air from bits and pieces of menhaden while striper feeding is underway. Both clues will tell me that stripers are nearby and ready to be caught with poppers.

To summarize, the fall is the start of 7 Up time in your kayak. Two 7-weights, strung as I have described in this article are good choices for some of the best kayak fishing of the year in local ponds and tidal waters. They will allow you to easily cast larger flies on windy days without fatigue. Yet, a 7-weight is light enough to give your pickerel and striper catches a sporting chance to show their fighting spirit.

Featured Fly Fishing Humor Compiled by Rich Batiuk

As seen on t-shirts worn by fly fishers...

"If at first you don't succeed, try another fly!"

Response: Great advice to live by. And clearly we haven't tied enough flies yet.

"Give a man fish and he has food for a day. Teach a man to fly fish, and he has to buy graphite rods, reels, waders, vests, fly boxes, flies, tippets, polarized glasses, leaders, clippers, nippers, strike indicators, rod cases, lanyards, nets, floatants, weights, gloves, dressings and hats."

Response: I really don't see the humor here...this is what fly fishers do, buy stuff and then more stuff.

"Save a worm's life, fly fish!"

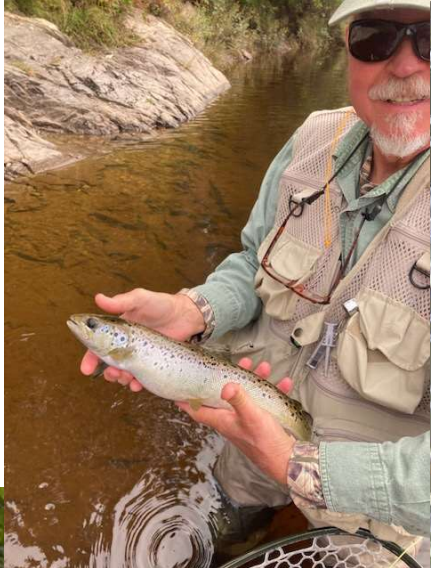
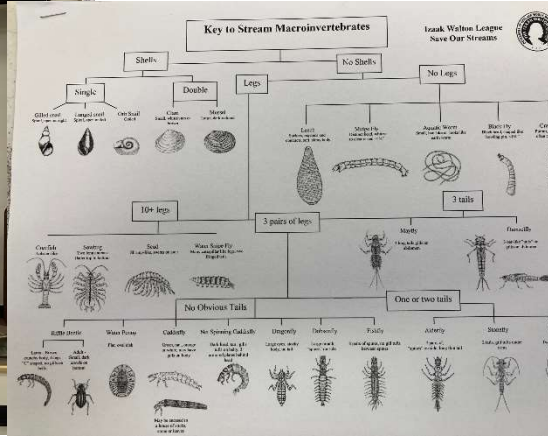
Response: "Gary, are you listening to this advice?"

"Born to Fish...Forced to Work."

Response: Being retired, I can no longer relate to this. I now think in terms of "Born to work...now out flyfishing."







Click [here](#) to renew your membership on-line or mail in the forms below if paying by cash or check.



FREE STATE FLY FISHERS, INC.

2023 Membership Application

Name: _____
 (First) (Last)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Renewal _____ New Member _____

If renewal → Is this a new address, phone number or email address? ___ Yes ___ No

Dues: \$15.00 per year

Payment Method: Cash _____ Check _____

Make checks payable to: FREE STATE FLY FISHERS, INC.

May we share your contact information with other club members? ___ Yes ___ No

Are you a member of Fly Fishers International? ___ Yes ___ No

Give the completed application and payment to Frank Bowne at an upcoming meeting or send the completed application and payment to:

Frank Bowne
 314 Chester Avenue
 Annapolis, MD 21403



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 2023 LEADERSHIP TEAM

President: [Duber Winters](#)
First Vice-President: [Bill Smith](#)
Second Vice President: [Luis Santiago](#)
Secretary: [Frank Bowne](#)
Treasurer: [Bill Smith](#)
Member-at-Large: [Ryan Harvey](#)
Directors: [Gary Grey](#) (Past President) / [Mike Mattia](#)

FREE STATE FLY FISHERS COORDINATORS

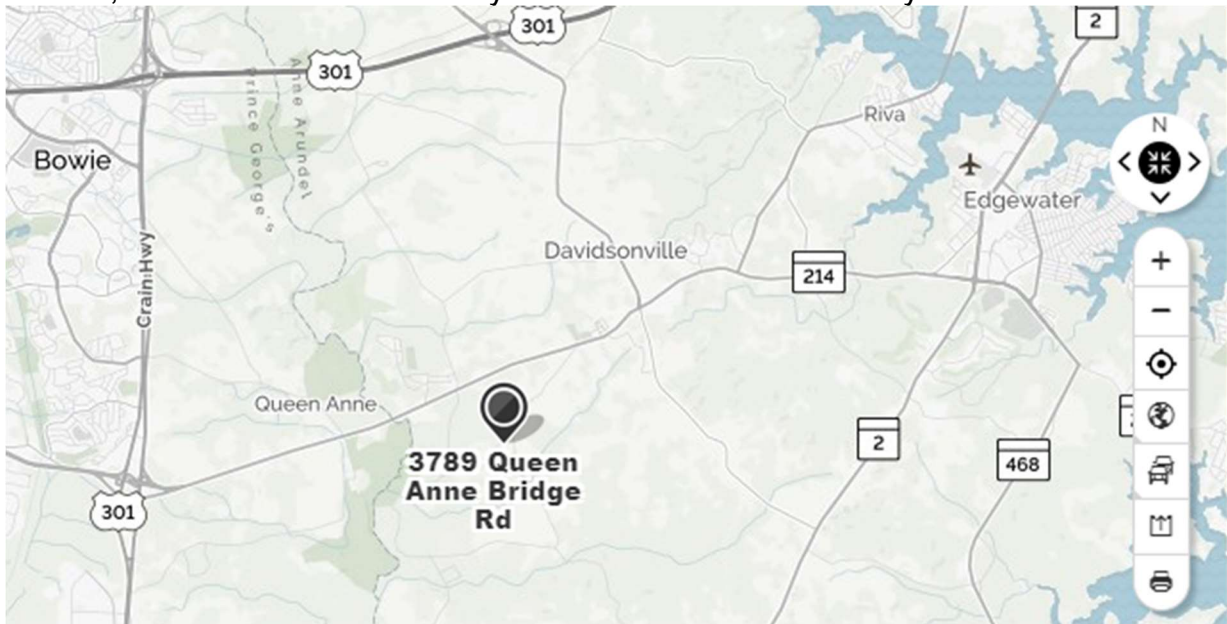
Clubhouse Coordinator: [John Rentch](#)
Davidsonville Family Recreation Center Representative: [Mike Mattia](#)
Club Librarian: Vacant
Chesapeake Council – FFI Delegate: [Frank Bowne](#)
Membership Coordinator: [Frank Bowne](#)
Social Media Coordinator: [Adam Bange](#)
YouTube Coordinator: [Frank Bowne](#)
Webmasters: [Luis Santiago](#) / [Frank Bowne](#)
Group Email Coordinators: [Luis Santiago](#) / [Frank Bowne](#)
Outings Coordinator: [Duber Winters](#)
Pond-of-the-Month Outings Coordinator: [Mike Mattia](#)
Biggest Bluegill/Biggest Pickerel Contests Coordinator: [Mark Bange](#)
Meeting Speakers Coordinator: [Gary Grey](#)
Fly Casting Clinics Coordinator: [Tim Ruthemeyer](#)
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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/>

Our YouTube Channel: <http://youtube.com/@fsffmd>

Email Us: fsffmd@gmail.com