

Windknobs

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A FISH STORY

By Bev Edwards



Early July found us winging our way north from Houston to Great Falls, Montana for a week of sight seeing, hiking and fly fishing in Glacier National Park. We spent time on the Canadian and the Montana sides of the park. The first day out we took a guided cruise on Waterton Lake, leaving from the dock at the Prince of Wales Hotel in Canada. We saw lots of bald eagles, deer, mountain sheep, and spectacular streams full of trout.

The second day in the park was the time to hike into the back country to fly fish some remote sections of the North Fork of the Flathead River on the Montana side. No fishing license is required in the National Park. We drove up a rough gravel road headed north close to the Canadian border and pulled off down a less traveled lane through timber to its end. We put on our day packs, fly fishing vest and I carried my new 8.5' Orvis four piece pack fly rod that I bought at the April TFF Auction. We climbed over downed timber for a very long mile, following a compass heading on the topographic map toward the North Fork of the Flathead

River. The big surprise came when I looked over the edge of a shear 70 degree slope cliff down 150 feet to the river below. The river was wild and very remote. My enthusiasm was too much, so I started sliding down the face of the cliff, holding onto branches to slow me down and keep from tumbling. I finally reached the bottom of the cliff pretty dirty and scratched. I looked up and waved to my wife to come on down. She had better sense and shook her head NO. Maybe there was an easier way down. I decided to try to climb back up and look for an easier slope down to the river. A longtime later I had crawled to within maybe 40 feet of the top of the cliff and I could go no farther. It was a straight up cliff face and it was crumbling. I was barely hanging on to the cliff face. I decided to throw her my gear up to the top. My day pack fell far short and tumbled into some brush. My fly fishing vest had my 50 year precious collection of flies, reels, tapered leaders, and tools. I threw my fly vest up in the air and it disappeared down a deep gully off to one side. I could not believe that my life time supply of trout flies had just disappeared. Then I realized that the highest priority was getting off of the cliff alive.

I slid down the cliff face again to the river, and my arms and legs were cut to pieces. I stumbled over the rocky river bed and walked about ½ mile up river where I found a rough timbered way up to the top. I climbed over downed timber and through water hazards until I finally made it to the top where I

got the lecture from my wife. We went back down the gravel road and eventually made it to the hotel in Kalispell, Montana and a shower.

The third day I was determined to recover my fly fishing vest. I hiked in again and went down the timbered slope to the river. I tried to climb the cliff again and I flat lost my nerve. My fly vest was no where in sight. Hanging on the cliff face I looked down below to the river and saw four hungry grizzly bears fishing in the river. Now what? They eventually wandered off into the timber, so I slid down the cliff, walked up river, climbed through the timber, and drove back to town. I did stop and buy a reel, tapered fly line, leaders, and some Bead Head Golden Ribbed Hares Ear Nymphs. I still had my Orvis pack rod clutched in my hand.

The fourth day back on the river I gave up on ever seeing my fly vest and we pulled off of the same rough gravel road into a river access point three miles up river from the scene of the disaster. We saw three rafters putting a huge red inflated raft into the river to take a 14 mile float. The leader was a Catholic priest and a real native Montana mountain man. I told them about my great loss three miles down river, and they invited us to climb aboard the raft. They said "We need a challenge." An hour later we had floated three miles down river and I pointed up the cliff to where my fly vest was lost. Those guys could climb the cliff better than the grizzly bears from the day before. A half hour later I was wearing my dusty fly vest, - whimpering. The Catholic Church saved me for sure!



We floated the 14 miles of wild North Fork and I caught rainbow trout until I got tired of catching them. We never saw a single soul on that stretch of wilderness river. The next day we drove nearly to the north end of the gravel road at the Canadian border and walked across a meadow to fly fish in solitude. I had the river all to myself all day and I caught lots of trout. I never used anything but the Golden Ribbed Hares Ear Nymph. I looked down into a very clear deep pool and saw a three foot long Bull Trout upside down on the bottom of the pool. What was wrong? I took pictures and watched for about five minutes. Suddenly the bull trout came to the surface in the jaws of a four foot long monster River Otter. The Otter dragged the Bull Trout into the bushes and

proceeded to have lunch. Gads! Glacier National Park is spectacular, but don't see it my way.



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SOME 'BOWS ON THE DAVIDSON RIVER

By Mike Graham

Thought I would take the time tell you about my recent fishing trip to western North Carolina and the Smokey Mountains with my younger brother Scott Graham. While staying at his home up in the mountains outside of Burnsville, North Carolina, he suggested we take some time to venture down to the Davidson River just an hour southwest of Ashville to take on some large rainbows and browns in a beautiful cobble filled river located there. Ok by me I said! The "Davidson River" is located in the Pisgah National Forest where there's a state trout hatchery for raising rainbows, Germans and brookies. So we decided to go on my last day in North Carolina, as the river was not to far from the airport I was to leave out of anyways. The scenery on our trip was as beautiful as the rest of the mountain I had seen so far. This past week I must have said the word beautiful over two hundred times during our jaunts around the Smokey Mountains. My first view of the national forest was as you would expect, large hard wood covered mountains full of rock out-croppings for as far as you could see. Around several "switchbacks" we found the river snaking through this absolutely stunning rock covered gorge setting. My first impression of the river was that it was about forty feet wide at its widest point as seen from the park road, however, once we gained access to the areas we fished, the Davidson was no more than twenty foot wide and over covered with vines and small sapling overgrowth. Scott said there is always a lot of people hammering the spot that we are going to, but that they go there to try and catch the "purge release" (when the trout holding tanks are purged of their bottom debris releasing tons of "food" into the river). It's then when the fish turn on like nobody's business and the locals try to catch a fish of a lifetime. However since these fish get hammered so often they are super hard to catch under normal conditions. Anyways, Scott and I arrived around noon and put on our gear, waders and all, grabbed the three weights, and hit the water.



You guys who know me know that besides being somewhat blind, that my body parts usually fight me on a daily basis and things like bending my knees or stooping under a branch or climbing a steep grade are not my cup of tea. Welcome to the Davidson. It's a cobble covered, tree over hung, steep embankment, wet, slippery aquarium full of wary trout. You see them swimming every where...which means they see you fishing everywhere. Scott ties a # 12 dry fly on my rod and then he in turn uses this huge streamer fly on his. He tells me to try only the riffle bottoms or where there is fast moving water! OK sounds good to me, that looks to be about everywhere around here. The next

moment I look up and he is twenty yards in front of me and disappearing into the dark flora.

So alone, I hit the water, cold you bet, clear of course, and here's that word again, it is absolutely beautiful. There are lots of small flying bugs I'd normally call knats but to you trout river bums, I'm sure they have some exotic name that spells food for the hungry trout. So I pick out my first location, several small quick running riffles that collectively dump into a 10' x 10' pool about two feet deep. I make my first of many casts into the small pool at the bottom of the riffles...nothing happens but my goals at this point are minimal so I'm just having the time of my life. Wading up stream to hit the riffle sections is a chore to say the least but I'm doing fine. I'm sure to most I would look like a bull in a china shop but I venture on keeping my back up against the west bank in order to minimize my mid-

afternoon shadow into the water. Fishing from the east bank is almost impossible as your looking into a mesmerizing glare off the running water. Like the ad on TV says "it like millions of tiny little mirrors". My first hour, I'm thinking is going great...no tree hang ups, no broken rods or tippetts and I'm still in one piece. For me, now that's what I call success!

Scott and I virtually had this portion of the river to ourselves. I have seen trout from six inches to...well really big trout! But no takers as of yet. I drifted a few shots on a couple of 'bows that seemed to be entertaining themselves and were not too aware of my presence yet. As I have never been really trained in the art of mending line, I can remember Scott saying earlier, "you MUST drift a dry fly at the same speed as the water is moving"...in other words no visible drag or wake coming off your fly while drifting it downstream. So I was practicing that "art" in this small riffle when all of a sudden out of nowhere a fairly large trout pounds my fly and I of course miss the set by a nano second but that's the game right there. Speed is of the essence! I was fishing in less than eight inches of fast moving water and there was a trout right there for the taking and I missed it. SUPERCOOL! Again... you folks who know me well know it is now... Game On!

So I left that 'lil hole in search of another with similar conditions and water features. Just above me I saw these three "step" pools where the current is really fast in between and directed by some large boulders into each successive pool. So not being able to take a direct route, I trudged up the wet muddy embankment, slid over a several fallen timbers, and skidded back down into the river darkness where I sat down against an exposed tree root to catch my breath. I studied the water around me to see what was going on and if I could spot any cruising fish. This place had trout written all over it, you could almost smell 'em. Of course one more clumsy step and I accidentally turned over a small cobblestone scarring out a large trout that was holding in the nearest river riffle less than five feet of my stumbling feet. I noticed that he hurried across the riffle onto the other bank that I was just watching, so I dropped my fly into the water at my feet, stripped off some line and made a cast towards the riffle. Bam...My first tree snag!!!! Darn't! Took me a couple of seconds (that felt like hours) to unsnarl the line snag, then I straighten out my somewhat twisted leader and tippet, in preparation of my next recast. Although I couldn't see the fish anymore I thought, well go ahead you idiot and try and work on my technique at least. My next cast wasn't any better than the first, but I did notice the water was really moving quick...so I stripped off more line and made a "short cast" releasing all of the extra line to allow the fly to drift thru the riffle without much drag. Hey, that worked pretty well I thought but still I noticed there was still some drag on the line. So I tried the same technique and this time I threw a (book learned) mend into the line like I knew what I was doing. Just after the cast, I thought while watching the fly drift over the riffle...hummm now that had to be a perfect presentation! WHAM... water splashed everywhere and you guess it, this large trout, undoubtedly the one I spooked over to the riffle, had just hammered my dry giving me a heart attack...but only after I gave him the old "Texas Coasty Trout Set". That 'bow was pissed and was churning up the water giving it his best aerial defense, jumping behind boulders, running up the riffle, dodging under a fallen log...the whole nine yards. If you know me you probably heard me. YeeHaw...consarnit...jam-a-slam-a...yeah Baby...go ahead troutski give me your best shot. Err... wait a minute this is a 3 wt. and tippet so small my morning breath could break it... and what the hey am I going to do next. Well I want you all to know I landed the 'bow in one of those fancy little wooden nets, dropped my fly rod and reel into the water like you see in all the troustream photos and placed my hands around the most beautiful twenty-three inch, four to five pound rainbow trout you ever did see. Although when I looked up to the sky, trees overhanging obscured my view of heaven but I gave my thanks to the big Guide in the Sky for the opportunity he had just given me on this beautiful day on the Davidson River.

I called out for Scott to bring the camera but he was nowhere in sight. I whistled loudly as our Dad used to call us for dinner but still no answer, so I knew, just like in Rockport last year, this trout was going into my memory bank and would be mine to cherish for the rest of my feable life. I marked on my rod the fishes' length and released her into the riffle again...hopeful to grow bigger and give some other angler his future thrill.

Later, I found Scott working hard to catch this big bow he had targeted for over forty minutes but he wasn't having any luck with his big streamer fly. We spoke for a few minutes about my catch as he

measured my rod marking and I showed him how I worked the fly again tossing the little dry fly out into a nearest riffle, releasing all extra line and mending the line just so and what happens...you guess it BAM...trout on! If you ever have the time to visit this pristine part of our wonderful country...do so you won't be disappointed. The locals are friendly, the views breathtaking, and the fishing spectacular. Next time you see me ask me about our trip down the South Holston River in Eastern Tennessee...Oh Baby!

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ANOTHER STORY FROM DON

By Don Puckett

My first introduction to Cajuns in Louisiana was because of a fishing trip. I didn't realize that these people are crazy. Neither did I know about their love of life and the serious business of having fun. Over the years I have tried to adopt their attitudes toward life in general. On with the story...

It was a late spring day. I had heard of the wonderful fishing at the wildlife refuge. There was a mix of salt and fresh water, so catching anything was possible. Flounder, redfish, spotted sea trout, ladyfish; all were all supposed to be in this one area.

I was fishing at the corner, where one tributary flowed into a main channel. I had to cross an even smaller creek to get to where I was. I was doing pretty good where I was. Every few casts I would get a bite. This was a good spot! Plenty of action, just the kind of fishing I like.

Then I saw what I first took to be a log floating down stream. I looked again and it wasn't there. I had heard stories about alligators. Was that one? I continued to fish but had now backed up from the shore about five feet. I figured that was a good safety margin. Now I was on the lookout for that suspicious log. I caught a few more good fish and put a couple of them on ice. Everything was looking up.

Then I caught a glimpse of the "log" again. I could clearly see the nostrils and the eyes as it slipped quietly back under the water. Now I didn't know what to do. I was having a lot of fun catching these fish and didn't want to leave. However, I didn't want my leg taken off either. I compromised and backed off from the shoreline about twenty feet. I was now casting over twenty feet of land and another forty or fifty into the water. This made the playing of any fish hooked difficult, but there was no way I was going to get any closer.

Then on the opposite shoreline I saw a couple of guys approaching. They quickly rigged up their lines and waded thigh deep out into the water.

"Hey, there is an alligator in this area. I've already seen him twice." I warned them. About that time the alligator surfaces again. "There it is!" I yelled. "Yup, big one too" the younger man replied as he cast his lure over the top of the alligator.

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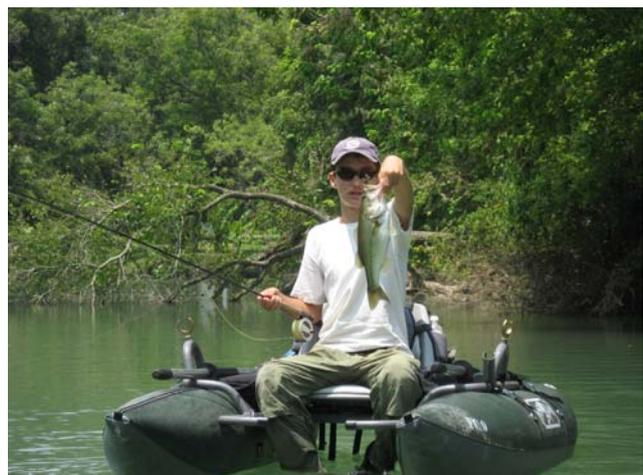
FRESHWATER OUTINGS UPDATE

BY Harry Crofton, CCI

The second half of the year was pretty tough what with all the rain. A number of events were cancelled – the Frio in July and the Colorado in September. Here are some photos from the freshwater outings that fit in between the high water events.

August – the San Marcos with Kevin ‘fishhead’ Hutchinson

Although there was a bunch of teeth gnashing because of the rain and the water levels Kevin scouted the San Marcos on the Wednesday before the trip and pronounced it fishable and, more importantly, safe. A small group of club members showed up and after a rocky start by Dick and Gary the river provided some good fishing.





October – Damon Seven Lakes

The outing to Damon's Seven Lakes was a great success thanks to Mike, Matt, and Pete Arnold. Mike provided the venue, the cooperative fish, flies, tips on how to catch those tiger bass, a late afternoon margarita wagon run, and just flat out made sure everyone had a good time. Pete, shod as always in a flash pair of Stacey Adams, handled the check-in process. And Matt handled lunch, grilling the burgers, dogs, and chicken. This let the trip leader fish more - thanks Matt. More than a few fish were caught by the twenty-two members and guests. All thanks to Mike and Buddy.





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Membership News

By Jack Klinger, Membership Chair

Since becoming your Membership Chairman my e-mail address has change to klingerj@netouch.net. I have been busy trying to update the club roster. Please e-mail me any changes to your home address, phone numbers, and e-mail address if they have changed in the last year.

We have about 383 people listed on the roster, of which 153 have paid their 2007/2008 dues. I will be purging the roster of all unpaid listings by Feb 5, 2008. For all those who have not renewed their membership but want to continue, please e-mail me or send your dues to the clubs PO Box before Feb 5.

Salty Flies, Jack

What's do Jack's numbers mean to your club? You do the math. Of the 230 individuals on our club roster that have not paid 2007/2008 dues about 90 were active members in 2006/2007. As Jerry noted in the July WindKnots, annual dues are the second largest source of funding for your club. So if you haven't paid your dues for this year please do so. - the Editor

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THE DAY BEFORE AND THE FIRST DAY OF FALL PORT O'CONNOR

By Aaron Hammer



Saturday - After striking out on the flats and surf, we switched boats and headed out to the first rig, hoping for Spanish mackerel. At the rig, we ran into schools of thrashing Blue Runners. They were feeding like mad all around. We chased the schools around for a couple hours. John Scarcelli and I probably caught at least 80 fish between the 2 of us. They weren't big, but were still quite sporting on an 8 wt.



Sunday - Out deeper, we caught a couple little tunny, a tripletail, and some more blue runners on flies. We also caught a barracuda and a couple red snapper on 'not' flies. Thanks to Joe Nicklo for his excellent guiding and captaining!

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BROKEN BOW ADVANCED FLY FISHING CLASS

OCTOBER 5TH

By Dave Steffek



Dave Steffek, Bob Orr, Joe Burton, and John Staggerwald and two of Bob Orr's friends from Dallas attended the class presented by Jesse King of Three Rivers Fly Shop near Beaver's Bend State Park, Broken Bow, Oklahoma. This was Jesse's 5th class of the year and he will be starting them again in January. All who attended the class felt they learned some new things to help them on their quest to improve fresh water trout fishing. The first hour of the class was a lecture at the fly shop and the last five hours was spent reviewing and practicing casts, presentation, and line management needed in riffles and the flats tailing riffles for the "objective targets"—preferred fish lies. Only a couple fish were caught during the on the water session - the class is not a guided fishing situation.

At the fly shop, Jesse covered many basics on set up including leaders and lines (for dries and nymphs). Jesse uses a 4X, seven and one half foot leader with two feet of tippet. He favors fluorocarbon tippet for nymphs. Lighter tippet 6X mono for dry flies to secure a smooth roll out. He went on to discuss what flies work well at the Lower Mountain Fork River (LMF) in the various seasons, and how this corresponds to air and water temperature, and also to bug activity. Jesse told us that "dropper rigs" are best for nymphing and for the "dry and dropper rig" up there. He discussed suggested fly combinations for both techniques (included up to four nymphs in a rig). For nymph fishing, he insisted bead heads are best most of the time. Jesse also demonstrated a knot none of us had seen or read about. This is the "16/20 knot" tied with hemostats and the fly during the knotting procedure. It requires only "one stick through a loop" to complete the knot versus "two sticks through two loops" with the clinch knot. Jesse also showed us a website to monitor the LMF flows, water temperature, water levels, and generation history—all good to use when doing your homework for a trip there. The site is www.swt-wc.usace.army.mil/BROK.lakepage.html.

Because most of the attendees of this class were relative newcomers to the sport, much attention was given to casting in specific situations (seams, verticals/rocks, logs, stick-ups, etc, troughs, banks, waterfalls, ledges, rough runs, smooth runs). This incorporated looking for and seeing those opportunities in whatever stretch of water a person fishes—certainly looking for fish is in the mix before the first cast. Presentation was also well covered. Subtleties for line control in the drift were covered with mending instructions (up and down stream), using up and down rod tip movement to feed out line (most preferred), and using side-to-side tip jiggle to feed out line. Fly placement was demonstrated with various casts including the reach mend or mend casts, drop cast and hook cast. Jesse showed how to put a mend in the line for both short and long casts. Use of the roll cast was stressed and demonstrated - Jesse uses it 80% of the time. Single and double hauling were demonstrated and discussed, including a simple "how to learn double hauling" session for the three members of your class that did not know how to haul. Jesse also encouraged we all learn how to cast with our non-dominant arm - at least the roll cast to deal with wind. One final, important thing that we all learned really matters is ca lean and lubricated fly line. Jesse encourages cleaning and lubricating line at least once in every fishing session. Those of us who did it really saw the difference. The tip of the fly line



will ride high, and pick up of fly line is much quieter and simpler. He also demonstrated a smooth line pick up technique (avoid ripping up line out of water at end of cast).

Jesse delivered some other clear messages about increasing your success. He preached to "not give up, keep making adjustments, go deeper, change flies, change retrieves, strip fast, hip-hop the fly to entice strikes, let the fly hang at the end of the drift, change modes like from indicator and nymph to dry and nymph dropper, try streamers".

Overall, the class seemed worth the effort and money to everyone that attended. The only negative voiced by a few of the more advanced fishers was not spending more time looking at various river and creek settings available for "on the water" stream reading instruction by Jesse. There was just not enough time in a 6 hour class to cover that too. Future classes may be able to arrange more time spent stream reading if everyone attending can have all the cast types mentioned above mastered before the class. It would be a trade off. It would just have to be discussed before the class was scheduled.

One last thing, the fishing report. Fish catching was slow especially below the Park Dam on LMF except in Lost Creek for the "fresh stockers" from the Thursday stocking (stockers go in every other Thursday). Bob Orr, John Staggerwald, and the Dallas gang wore them out. Biggest contributor to slow fishing - water temp rising to 72 in afternoons. Miss a fish once, and it will be your last chance. Fishing should really pick up in November. Best catches seen or discussed: 1. Mid-way up the Evening Hole on the upper end of the LMF in Zone 1 (20 fish in one day – two guys). 2. At the very end of the road beyond the Park Dam in Zone 2 in the "chute riffle" (14 fish on Saturday).

Joe Burton went from no-fish or one-fish- a-session catches to "5 fish a session catches" on his last two outings. Look out, he's applying what he learned.

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TROUT OF THE EMERALD ISLE

By J P Morel



As I mended my fly line a savage strike ensued, okay it was as savage as a 10 inch brown trout could muster, and then a beautiful fish came flying out of the River Maigue doing all he could to lose the nymph lodged in the corner of his jaw. He lost the battle but lived to fight another day as I gently released him back into his home waters in Adare, CO Limerick, Ireland.

Standing knee deep in a wild flowing river catching brown trout that did not come from a hatchery was one of the most memorable moments of my fishing career. Gazing at the stone bridge built back in the 13th century one can only imagine what this river was like back then. Even though the wind was blowing in the twenties and the rain was falling in sheets, I was having the time of my life.

Just for a little variety we caught a few rainbow trout as well and they also performed quite admirably.



The fish were small but every one that ate my nymph acted as if he was the bull of the river as they jumped clean out of the swirling waters of the River Maigue. Under the gray dark skies the radiant colors of the trout were a bit subdued but still were enough to make you marvel at the sheer beauty of the wild brown trout.

The River Maigue rises from the Ballyhoura Mountains in County Cork and winds its way thru the countryside passing near the towns of Croom and Adare in County Limerick before entering the estuary of the River Shannon a bit north of Askeaton. The Shannon then continues on finally ending at the Atlantic Ocean.

Many sections of the Maigue are controlled by private clubs but one can still find plenty of fishable water and some sections are available for a small fee of 15 euros. Well worth it I might add.

When the boss/wife informed me that the next company trip was going to be to Ireland my first thought was cool, we're going to Ireland. My next immediate brain movement was how can I arrange a fishing trip while there. This proved to be much more of a challenge than one could imagine. I wanted to find a guide - they call them ghillies there - that could provide everything from transportation to all equipment including waders.

After all, they drive on the wrong side of the road and I was not about to try that especially with all the Irish beer to be sampled. Lugging gear around for nine days and only able to fish one did not seem feasible, so finding the right guide was important. Many hours of internet surfing and phone calls later, I finally found one. Patrick Dunworth, Irish fishing guide offering fly fishing trout trips all gear provided.

We e-mailed each other to confirm the date and services that he offered and I was set to go fly fishing in Ireland for wild brown trout. As with any new adventure the anticipation was building.

One tip on fishing abroad that I never really thought of before. Do not schedule your trip for the day after you arrive for you may not arrive till that day given airline delays what they are today. The flight from Houston to Atlanta was fine but we encountered a seven hour delay in Atlanta due in part to weather but I suspect the major cause was the airport bombing in Scotland.

After arriving at the airport in Shannon, Ireland and collecting our bags it was time to clear customs. It was then I began to realize that the people of Ireland are some of the most friendly you will ever encounter. The customs agent actually had a smile and asked the usual questions in a manner that made you feel genuinely welcome to be visiting his country. It was an attitude that we would encounter many more times during our trip.

We arranged transportation to the hotel and our driver loaded us up in his Mercedes with the steering wheel on the right side. Soon after leaving the city I became very happy with the decision of not driving in Ireland. The roads are two feet narrower than in the states and the drivers are courteous but seem to want to get where they are going, now. And we were able to see the country.

The countryside was absolutely gorgeous with the rolling green hills and sheep farms crossed with stone fences built back in who knows when. The occasional cattle farm popped up now and then just to break up the scenery a bit. Our driver filled us in on points of interest along the way and made a forty minute drive seem like ten.

After arriving at our hotel in Adare, we then tried to shake off the effects of a six hour time difference and the seven hour plane ride from Atlanta. The little two hour flight from Houston to Atlanta was long forgotten. I went to sleep that night thinking of brown trout and hoping to not embarrass myself with my casting skills the next day.



The next morning Paddy Dunworth arrived right on time and after brief introductions we set off to chase some trout. We were greeted by twenty mile per hour winds and very occasional rain. Not the best of conditions by far. Paddy was optimistic and said that we would have to change our game plan a bit but still should do okay. He was right.

Given the weather we were fishing nymphs as a dry fly would have very soon become a wet fly with all the rain coming down. I had fished for trout with nymphs in Wyoming but that was from a drift boat and vastly different circumstances. Here you were standing in river current and making casts across the river and then letting the line drift with a slow stripping retrieve.

It was not all that technically difficult except for the constant high winds. And as usual it seemed that most of the pools we fished forced us to cast directly into the teeth of a wind that seemed to have one purpose in life and that was to shorten every cast I made. Thankfully the brown trout were oblivious to our struggles and they ate our nymphs with pure abandon. If one was able to make a cast that resulted in the proper drift, the fish would cooperate with a mighty strike.



As I walked different sections of the river one had to constantly remind one that this was the year 2007, for after you were away from the roads the only sound was the wind and rain. No city noise or outboard motors to ruin the pristine stillness of the moment, just you and the fish.

I have never understood the mystique associated with fly fishing for trout until now. When I was on that river

alone it seemed that I had no worries in the world and that my sole mission in life was to fool a wild and wary brown trout. Every success brought a new thrill like it was the first one all over again.

Even though we spent a few hours on each stretch of the river it felt like only minutes had passed and it was over all too soon. According to my good friend Gary Taylor, I am well on my way to becoming a trout bum. Perhaps I am.



My ghillie for the day was Patrick Dunworth and a fine ghillie he was. As promised he provided everything for the day including lunch. His equipment was first rate and his knowledge of the local waters and surrounding locale was vast. Each area was explained in detail and numerous sights were pointed out along the way that made the trip much more than just a fishing trip. If you ever find yourself in Adare, Ireland and have the itch to catch a brown trout then Paddy Dunworth can help you out. His service is called Celtic Angling and is on the web@ www.celticangling.com

After years of catching many fish along with some fairly large fish, this trip ranks up there with the best I have ever had. My only regret about this trip is that pictures were hard to come by with the rain.

I guess it's going to be hard to beat fishing in a breathtakingly beautiful country with friendly people and wild trout. Gary Taylor was right; trout bum in the making.

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Is It Time To Double Haul?To Double Haul?

By David Lemke, CCI

As fly fishermen and fly casters, we progress through a variety of different levels and often settle at an occasional skill plateau. Every fly caster has plateaus that they reach but often struggle to achieve the next level. The beginning caster is pleased at the success of a nice loop that is created on purpose rather than by accident, and happy when the fly goes in the general direction that it was intended to go. The advanced caster may struggle with the ability to carry 85 feet of line in the air rather than 84 feet. In the progression of a fly caster's casting skills, the inability to cast using the double haul is usually one of those barriers that prevent him from reaching next casting level.

So what does the double haul do for us?

The haul increases line speed by adding speed to the line as the rod tip moves along its path through the casting stroke. This speed increase creates tighter, faster loops and more line control at all distances. The double haul does this for each cast, forward and back. The control that's attained from double hauling enables the caster to present the fly better, whether it's a dry fly, streamer or a large deer hair bass popper. It lessens the impact of wind on the cast; tighter, faster, efficient loops give the wind less line surface area to catch, cutting through the wind. The control of the fly line between the stripping guide and the line hand improves removing unwanted slack in the casting system. Last, the double haul allows the caster to carry more line in the air with each cast, which ultimately adds distance to the cast. Once mastered, it just makes casting easier and using it becomes addictive.

How do you do the double haul?



There are two techniques that can be used to learn the double haul, which when used together provide the best results. A little bit of coordination is required, but by practicing the hand movements of the line and rod hand using a pantomime, it can be mastered pretty quickly.

The first technique uses a casting pantomime. I'll dissect the different motions of the line and rod hand from a right-handed casting perspective, and then put them together into the complete casting motion. Initially, pantomime the double haul without a rod in your hand. If you need to hold something in your rod hand, use a pen or a pencil. Before trying the double haul with a rod and line in your hands, you need to build proper muscle memory using the pantomime technique.

Begin with the motion of the line hand by itself. Fly casting icon, Mel Krieger, has coined a term "downup" to describe this motion. Start by placing your line hand in front of the middle of your chest. Then in a single, fluid motion, pull your hand down to the left hip and back up to the starting chest position. Repeat this motion until you've developed some muscle memory. Because the downup motion is performed

during the casting stroke, the muscle memory is necessary when we add in the rod hand.

The haul starts with the rod and line hand together at the beginning of the casting stroke. Raise the rod tip as you would at the beginning of the cast and start the back cast. As the rod hand moves through the casting stroke, perform the downup motion with the line hand.

Time the line-hand motion so that the line-hand reaches it's farthest down position when the rod hand comes to a stop at the end of the casting stroke. While the line is unrolling, reset the line-hand to the rod hand position. This is the up of the downup. Once the line has unrolled, you are ready to start the next haul on the forward cast. The motion is the same.

The line hand hauls in proportion to the rod hand, as a mirror image. For shorter casts, with less line speed, the haul is shorter. For longer casts, as the casting stroke gets longer and the line speed requirements increase, the haul must be longer.

Good, crisp rod stops and good timing are important to successfully using the double haul in your casting.

The next technique that's very helpful in learning the double haul is casting with rod and line in a horizontal cast, parallel to the ground.

In this exercise, start facing perpendicular to the casting plane where the rod tip will move from left to right. Place the rod tip to your left with about 25-30 feet of line out sufficiently beyond the tip with minimal slack. Pull out a few feet of line on the ground so you have some line to haul and shoot. This starting position will be the beginning point of the back cast. Perform one cast, using the hauling motion that was previously described. Let the line completely unroll and land on the ground to the right of you. If everything is done properly, at the end of the rod stop, a nice tight loop should form and the slack line in your line hand should completely shoot out of the rod. Do the same thing on the forward cast, casting from right to left. Practice using this horizontal cast, until you have mastered the coordination of the line and rod hand and the fly line and the rod. Once you're comfortable with the horizontal double haul, try casting in the vertical plane that is the normal casting plane.



Should you try to figure this out on your own?

While the double haul is relatively simple to do once you've mastered it, getting to mastery can be challenging and often frustrating. Hopefully, the explanation in the previous section is useful. Before you start to learn to double haul, your casting skills need to include the ability to throw reasonably tight loops out to 40 feet, which by definition means that you are executing good, crisp rod stops. You need to have the ability to cast with a minimum amount of slack, managing line with a line hand and the rod hand. And, you need to be able to shoot line. If you can do all of the above, your chances are pretty good of being able to figure it out on your own. There are a number of videos available that teach the double haul – Mel Krieger's *Essence of Fly Casting* or Joan Wulff's *Dynamics of Fly Casting* to name a couple. The Texas Fly Fishers casting program offers a double haul clinic, or an hour or two with a FFF certified casting instructor should be sufficient to help you



master this skill. Good luck!



BEGINNERS FLY TYING CLASS

By Frank Schlicht, Education Chair

The TFF annual Beginners Fly Tying Course registration will be held Monday evening, January 14, 2008 at 7:00 pm at Bethany Christian Church, 3223 Wertheimer. The registration fee for this 10 week course is \$25.00, payable at the time of registration. Classes will be held from 7:00 to 9:00 pm every Monday evening at the church. If you do not have tools, the club has tool kits that it makes available for a \$25.00 refundable deposit. The club also has materials kits available that contain all of the necessary hooks, threads, etc. that will be required for the course at cost to the club. In the past, they have cost \$100.00. I hope that we can make them available at this price again in 2008; but, I can't be sure of this as I do not yet have a quote from our provider. At any rate, they should be less than \$125.00. The price in the past has been approximately 60-70% of what the same materials kit would cost if you put it together at one of at the local shops. As we can seat only 24 students, please let me know ASAP of your interest in taking the course to ensure you a seat. You can contact me by phone at: 281-392-5296; or email at: aged_sage@hotmail.

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What is the difference between a \$250 and a \$700 Fly rod?
Practically speaking about \$ 450.

By Barkley Souders

Not trying to be flippant, let us discuss the evolution of building fly rods. This question is often asked by new fishermen and older hands who are investing in new rods.

Usually a person begins with a recommended rod weight for the fishing he expects to encounter. The problem arises when the circumstances really dictate the use of a quite different rod. In my experience, I find that I need to have a #3 small trout or panfish rod, a # 4 -8 or 9' small river trout rod, a #5 all around trout rod for bigger rivers and lakes, and finally a # 8 -9' rod for the saltwater / bass fishing. Like the game of golf, you can't play the game with one club. Your cost to be equipped is about \$1000 to more than \$2800. That is a lot of money for perhaps 10 days per year.

Some of us started with bamboo rods. My rods were from Phillipson and South Bend. Along came glass and I was hooked on these lighter rods from Sila-Flex and later Fenwick. In the 1980's Fenwick came out with 90% Graphite Casting rods and Fly Rods. In 1985 I joined the pro-staff of G. Loomis and experienced the change IM-6 to the rod industry. Since 1988 I have been Sales Representative in the Fishing Industry. I have represented G. Loomis, StCroix, Quarrow, All Star, and currently Tim Rajeff's Echo Rods. I have had many discussions with the engineers, rod designers. Further, I have observed the rod making process in the various manufacturing plants. I think this qualifies me to discuss the products and pricing in the market place.

Don Green established Sage in 1980. He started with 6 employees and a 1500 square foot workshop. The company currently has over 130 craftsmen and occupies 30, 000 square feet. Jerry Seem is their current leader.

Gary Loomis came on the scene in the mid 1980's after leaving Loomis Composites. By destiny, he was about broke and could not afford the manufacturing tables to make rods. Fortunately Cabelas came to his rescue and the new company became a pioneer in new composite rods using Boeing Cad Systems to design and Steve Rajeff to assist in designing well respected casting and fly rods.

The history of all the rod companies is bumpy. Winston was sold as was Scott. Their new owners have made them into household names. St Croix was sold and bough back by the Shluter family.

Much of the current advertising is misleading. The term graphite covers a number of products, fibers developed primarily for the Space and Airplane industries. Today most rods cannot be identified by a single fabric such as IM-6 or IM-7. These products were developed by Hexcel Corporation and were the first to be used in the fishing business. New rods are currently made of a composite of materials which have different characteristics. A different material may be used in the butt section to stiffen the action, whereas the material in the tip may be completely different in character. Specific engineering skill is used in the manufacture of all the premium rod companies today. Newly developed fabrics containing Boron, as an example, have been added to the mix.

Once a formula is decided, the various graphite fabric layers are overlain by a resins (glass, graphite) and a layer called scrim is added perpendicular to the graphite fibers (almost always fiberglass). These rolls of combined elements are called 'Pre Preg' and are sticky with resins. The 'Pre Preg' is stored in a freezer until ready to make a rod blank. This keeps the resins from setting.

The 'Pre Preg' is cut into specific shapes known as patterns with a different pattern for each rod blank. A pattern room is an interesting collection of patterns which affect the finished product.

Plotting machines cut the 'Pre Preg' with a high degree of accuracy. The 'Pre Preg' is then wrapped tightly around a steel mandrel which is the interior shape of the finished rod. This wrapping is done on a special rolling table. The edge of the 'Pre Preg' is cut and affixed to the table then the table moves to roll the blank.

The rolled tube is then wrapped with heat shrink plastic wrap to maintain the integrity of the roll. The roll is then loaded into an oven, hanging by the tip. This product is then heated, baked to cure the resins. The mandrel is withdrawn from the cooled tube. These mandrels are used again and again. With out enough mandrels, production on a specific rod can be delayed.

Now the heat Shrink is removed and the blank is either sanded to remove the wrapping marks or painted by dipping into a vat of paint. Some blanks are left natural which leaves them lighter. If checking does not detect defects, the next step is checking the spine (the stiffest side of the rod) and adding the finishing components - reel seats, guides, and labels.

If we go back a step Loomis, Sage, St Croix, and Fenwick were ahead of the pack. In fact they made or still make OEM rods for other companies such as Cabelas and Orvis.

Then the Koreans and Chinese entered the fray. They have qualified engineers, and rolling tables. They buy graphite materials and the same finishing components as their US competitors. Add an extensive workforce. Under the guidance of qualified American Rod Designers they can produce high quality products. Companies such as Reddington, Echo, and Temple Fork produce quality rods in China. This is not the case for all foreign produced rods. The inexpensive rods are made of the cheapest graphite materials with little guidance in their manufacture.

Another way they compete without outside guidance is to reverse engineer from a finished product. At Quarrow, engineers were able to reproduce several casting rods and fly rods. One such rod is their Drake series which are essentially Sage copies.

Going back to the beginning: What is the difference between a \$250 and a \$700 fly rod?

- Production Cost in the USA

- Payroll Costs
- Building costs and taxes in the USA
- Assume similar costs for graphite and finishing components
- Extensive advertising which can add appreciably to the marketing cost

As far as castability, if you are an expert and can hit a 2' target at say 40 to 75 feet on a consistent basis, I would consider your analysis of the various rods. I would rather own several rods with similar Warranty.

~



What's the FFF up to?

Conservation Update
September and October 2007

Reprinted with permission

Positions & Letters:

An important part of conservation work within the FFF is providing a voice for fisheries and anglers across the nation. By communicating with legislators, agency leaders and other conservation organizations, we create a working relationship that helps protect fisheries.

- Letter to Senator Brasso encouraging legislation to protect fishing and hunting from irresponsible energy development in the Western States.
- Letter to Dept. of Interior Secretary Kempthorne and Director Portman encouraging support for the US Geological Survey's Cooperative Water Program (NSIP) and the National Streamflow Information Program (CWP). We support full implementation of the NSIP and increased funding for CWP.
- Letter to Senator Rockefeller encouraging the support of legislation that would create permanent tax incentives for donations of conservation easements. This legislation would complement the Farm Bill conservation programs.
- Letter to managers in Fisheries and Oceans Canada objecting to the Marine Stewardship Council Certification of imperiled salmonid stocks in British Columbia.
- Letter to Senators Boxer and Feinstein to recognize importance of the Sacramento River National Recreation Area Act of 2007 (S. 811) protect important natural resources.
- Letter to Senators Warner and Lieberman to recognize the addition of fish and wildlife conservation funding proposal to introduced climate change legislation.
- Letter to Utah State Director of Bureau of Land Management regarding a decision to withdraw parcels from the August lease sale and cancel the planned November lease sale for potential oil and gas development.
- Letter to Senator Cantwell requesting her to encourage Senator Boxer to hold hearings in the Senate Environment and Public works Committee regarding Snake River Salmon issues.

Staff Activities and Program Updates:

- The much anticipated upgrade to the Federation of Fly Fishers web site has finally happened. A major goal was to make navigation easier for the visitors and improve the functionality of the site. While we still have some bumps in the road, we hope that finding conservation information will be easier. Take a look. We will continue to add and improve upon the website in the future. Please re-direct links on club/council web pages to <http://www.fedflyfishers.org>

- Recent Cuttcatch recipient: Fly Fisher Mike McWethy from the State of Washington recently completed the Project Cuttcatch by not only catching and releasing the required 4 cutthroat, but also took the challenge one step further and caught and released all of the Cutthroats. Need inspiration for your next fly fishing trip – try Project Cuttcatch! Learn more on the FFF website.
- Participated in numerous conference calls as part of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership Fish, Wildlife and Energy working group for Energy Issues and the Endangered Species Coalition regarding legislative issues and threatened and endangered species.
- Several retailers of fly fishing products will be using the Clean Angling Pledge in the product information packets and catalogs for 2008. Several fly fishing retailers have been very supportive of the Clean Angling Pledge and recognize that a healthy business relies on healthy fish and fish habitats.
- Wild Trout Symposium was held October 9-12 with participation from the FFF Conservation Coordinator, Chief of Operations and President/CEO. A more detailed note on the important part the FFF has played and continues to in this symposium begins below. This symposium is informative and fun – and anyone interested in wild trout can and should attend. The next symposium, Wild Trout-X, will be held in 2010. Information will be available at www.wildtroutsymposium.com.

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FLY TYING – THE WOOLY JIG

By Mike Arnold, Damon's Seven Lakes



Materials:

Large Hackle, six strands of brown/green spec and two strands of blue spec, gold plastic eyes, #6 long shank- bend back, rattle, black/pearl flashabou (3 strands cut in half three times), olive/brown variegated chenille not shown. The rattle is optional. No weight for shallow lakes. Hackle works as a guard. Slow fall works best.



1).

Mount hook to vise. Secure eyes at bend, tie back to end and apply the Flashabou. Cement the eyes.



2).

Center the strands at rear of hook and loosely tie to eyes. Apply three tight wraps behind eyes then two tight wraps in front of the eyes.



3).

Tie in the Rattle (Optional). Tie on the hackle and Olive/Brown Chenille. Be sure to cement the rattle covering the thread completely.



4).

Run the thread forward just behind the eyes. Wrap and tie in the Chenille. (at this point if you wish to add weight, apply in front of eyes at this point)



5).

Wrap and tie in the hackle. Your own color schemes for the Hackle, Chenille, Flashabou, and Rubber Legs should be tried, along with hooks and eyes.



6.)

Brings the legs back over the eyes, wrap into shape with three wraps. Tie in the head and cement/lacquer head. Let Dry. Keep a tight line and FISH!

MORE FLY TYING - THE CRAFT FUR MINNOW

By Don Puckett

Materials:

Hook - Mustad 34011 size 6, bend-back style
hread - Uni-thread size 6/0 white
under wing and over-wing - tan craft fur
wing brace - light brown fish hair
eyes - holographic chartreuse 3-d eyes
sealer/glue - 5-minute epoxy.



1.)

Bend the hook slightly and tie in thread.



2.)

Tie on and under-wing of craft fur.



3.)

Tie in the wing brace. This is what will keep the supple craft fur from wrapping around your hook when you cast.



4.)

Tie in the over-wing. I usually tie in at the sides and top to almost hide the wing brace.



5.)
Place the eyes.



6.)
And, lightly coat with 2-part epoxy.



7.)
Pulling back on the wing to make sure it places as you want it as the epoxy cures.



8.)
The black marker gives this fly its parr markings. They are not needed, but I like them



9.)
Go fish.

~

Making Texas Flyfishers a Beneficiary of Your Estate

By Corey Rich

Someone has asked how to make Texas Flyfishers a beneficiary of one's estate. It is simple, really. All you have to do is ask your lawyer to add a codicil (an addendum) to your existing Will, or draft a new Will that makes TFF a beneficiary.

First, though, you have to decide what you want to give. Money? Fishing gear? Something else? Money is easy. Just instruct your lawyer to make a provision to leave \$X or Y% of your residual estate (that's what's left over after paying debts and taxes) to TFF.

If you want to give away your fishing gear, you can be vague or very descriptive. If you want to give everything you have to the club, simply say "I give all my fishing tackle, fly tying equipment and materials, and related gear to the Texas Flyfishers club of Houston, Texas, whose address is P.O. Box 571134, Houston, Texas 77257-1134."

If you only want to leave part of what you have to the club, you need to be more specific. Keep in mind, though, that if you've left, say, your Tibor Everglades reel and Sage Xi2 8-wt. to the club, and thirty years from now when you finally go to that great bonefish flat in the sky you no longer have that reel and rod, the gift lapses. In other words, if you give something specific in your Will and you no longer own it at the time of your death, there is no gift. Your executor does not have the right to substitute.

One final note. If you name TFF, or any charity or governmental entity as a beneficiary, the person who files the application for probate of the will must notify the charity or governmental entity at the time of filing the application for probate. It's no big deal, but it has to be done, and the proposed executor must give testimony at the hearing on the application that a charity or governmental entity is a named beneficiary.

If you have any question, please feel free to call Corey Rich at 713-864-1888 during working hours, or email corey.rich@aya.yale.edu.

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TFF FIRST EVER ROD BUILDING COURSE

By Frank Schlicht

Texas Fly Fishers held its first ever rod building course in October and December. Ken Murph, well know Houston custom rod builder, taught the course with Frank Schlicht assisting. Ten members of the club, Fred Tooley, Harry Crofton, Joe Burton, Russell Cowart, John Staigerwald, Jerry Brown, Mark Jones, Offie Walker, Gregg McQueen, and Skip Donovan, proved to be very capable and competent students. Two were even brave enough to undertake the task of turning their own cork handles, and each did an outstanding job. The course was held on two consecutive Saturdays from 9 to 4:30, with no time for anything but a lunch break. By the end of the second Saturday, it was apparent that a third day was going to be required to complete the rods, as most had just gotten started wrapping the guides on. It was agreed that the earliest that all could get together again would be in December. Thus, everyone was given the assignment of getting all of their wrapping done before the next session so that all could apply the epoxy to their wraps at the same time. One enterprising student, Fred



Tooley went so far as to not only finish wrapping his rod, but applied the requisite epoxy to the wraps and then took the rod fishing. The attached photo shows Fred with the 21 inch brown he caught on the Watauga River near the Tennessee, North Carolina border with his brand new personally made rod. Congratulations Fred!!

~

ComCast Subscribers

By Harry Crofton, CCI

Still having trouble viewing the Texas Flyfishers's website? We've heard you. Webmaster Dave and Harry have been working hard to get Comcast to fix the problem but with little success. There is however a workaround that I have tested on Internet Explorer and Safari. Rather than go into the details here send an e-mail to hcrofton@goodloops.com and I will send you a note on how to fix it. You don't have to be too much of a geek to put the workaround in place.

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TENTATIVE 2008 FRESHWATER OUTINGS SCHEDULE

Our outings schedule is a work-in-progress. Here are the freshwater trips we have currently scheduled for 2008. Sometimes dates and places change. Announcements will be made at the club meetings and posted to the website. Check the website www.texasflyfishers.org regularly to make sure you have the latest information.

To volunteer as a trip leader, contact the fresh water outings chairman Harry Crofton or the salt water outings chairman Rod Henderson. Their telephone numbers and email addresses are on the Executive Committee listing later in this issue.

26 January	Guadalupe One Fly
22, 23, and 24 February	Broken Bow
22 March	Yegua Creek
26 April	Sunfish Spectacular
16 May	Village Creek (this one is on a Friday)
14 and 15 June	Llano River near Junction
26 July	Frio River
9 August	San Marcos River
13 September	Colorado River near Webberville (Marcos are you ready?)
11 October	Seven Lakes
(18 and 19 October	Fredericksburg Flyfishers's Oktoberfisch)
15 November	Back to the Guadalupe

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For Sale by Club Members

For Sale – 1998 Boston whaler, 15', center console, 60 H.P. Boat and motor in excellent condition. Fine boat for bay or lake fishing. Mc Clain galvanized trailer. \$4,500 OBO.

Dave Sheaff 281.497.2739

~

TEXAS FLYFISHERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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President
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About the Wind Knots

Wind Knots is your newsletter, and it needs your help – otherwise we'll run out of things to print. E-mail your articles, photos, artwork, graphics, fishing news, tall tales, lies, and letters to the editor to hjcrofton@mail.com. During 2007 it is our intention to issue Windknots quarterly starting in July.

If you have digital photos, please send them via e-mail in .JPG format. If you have paper photos, mail them to Harry Crofton, 3733 Drummond, Houston, Texas 77025. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you want the photos returned.

The preferred form for text – stories, letters, and so forth – is in Microsoft Word. Please try to keep your offerings in the 800 to 1,000 word range, or less. If you send photos along with an article, proposed captions are appreciated.

Wind Knots is posted on the club's Web site as soon as it becomes available. Check www.texasflyfishers.org regularly for the latest newsletter and other news of interest.





Texas Flyfishers
P.O. Box 571134
Houston, TX 77257-1134

Texas Flyfishers Membership Application

Please check one: New Application Renewal

To join Texas Flyfishers or renew your membership, please complete this form and mail it with your check to the address below, or bring it with you to one of our monthly meetings. All memberships expire June 30th of each year, and renewals are due July 1st. New members, please pro-rate your payment for the number of months between now and the end of June, inclusive. Our monthly meetings are held on the last Tuesday of every month (except December), beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Dues are for (check one): Individual at \$24 a year Family at \$32 a year Student at \$16 a year

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Email: _____

TEXAS FLYFISHERS
P.O. BOX 571134
HOUSTON, TX 77257-1134