

WIND KNOTS

APRIL 1988

April Meeting

DATE April 26, 1988

PLACE .. The Apollo Room
Viscount Hotel
2828 S.W. Fwy. (Kirby Exit)

TIME ... 7:00 **FIT TO BE TYED**
"Gerbubble Hair Bug"

7:30 **MAIN PROGRAM**
Dan Edwards:
"Trout Fishing in Chile"

Fly - Tying

The intermediate lessons are underway, so do not forget to go to St. John's Church, River Oaks and Westheimer, on Thursday, May 12th in Room 010 at 7:00. Chairman Ed Rizzolo has scheduled one of the finest tiers in the country, our own Mitch Whitney, who will instruct you how to spin deer hair. There is nobody anywhere better at this than Mitch. No registration is necessary. Just come along and enjoy a great evening. It's one of the very best perks that this club offers.

Outings

Chairman Paul Akscyn reminds us of the Colorado River canoe outing to be held on May 14th. Bev Edwards will be the guide and Dave Novak will do the organizing. Mark your calendar and call Paul at 683-6988 (h), 484-2531 (w); or Dave at 451-0323 (h), 425-2194 (w) for details. This trip will offer a nice combination of fishing, scenery, fellowship, and exercise.

Fishing News

Apparently confusing us with a member club of the FPWF (Federation of Plastic Worm Fishers), Bev Edwards has sent us photographic evidence of a 12 pound bass he landed in March at the very private Koon Kreek Klub in Athens, Texas. The modest Mr. Edwards tells us that it was simply too cold and windy that day to use fly tackle, and we believe him. But that won't stop his court-martial. Perhaps he can get a refund of the unused portion of his TFF dues.

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Like a band of Hell's Angels, a horde of TFFers descended on the unsuspecting hill country hamlet of Junction in mid-March. Charlie Thanheiser, John Scarborough, Bev Edwards, Tony Woods,

Frank Schleicher, George Ayres, Jim Bridges, Anno Breitenfeldt, Charles McCann, and Bob Spain were after Guadalupe bass and bluegills in the pristine Llano River. Cold weather and slow

(Continued on page 3)

March Meeting

A nice crowd of 80 members and 10 visitors enjoyed hearing about the plans for the Sunfish Spectacular from John Scarborough. The nominating committee announced the slate of officers for the election to be held at the June meeting. Nominated are:

Wright Guthrie
President

Paul Akscyn
Vice President

Temp Deaver
Treasurer

Mark Hollier
Secretary

The main program was a slide presentation by professional guide Harry Lane of Farmington, N. M. The program was divided into two parts, concerning two very different but equally fantastic rivers in Harry's area, the Delores and the San Juan. Harry did a fine job of whetting some TFF appetites for that high mesa country and those two fish-filled streams.

The Conservation Corner

by: Cameron Armstrong

Hydrilla

Hydrilla, the decorative aquatic weed beloved of the aquarium set, has been a problem for north american sportsmen and wildlife managers for nearly thirty years. Carried by hobbyists far beyond the boundaries of its original east asian home, the plant's range now includes tropical and sub-tropical areas on all continents. Established in Florida streams during the late fifties, it had by 1969 found a home in the pond at Hermann Park Zoo. Lakes Livingston and Conroe were soon overgrown with the pesky weed, which has since spread to more than 40,000 acres in 32 Texas reservoirs.

The drawbacks to hydrilla are its incredible growth rate and its ability to live in much "darker" waters than any of its native competitors. The plant can average growth of several inches per day during a typical Texas summer. Worse still, it thrives in very low light, making deep and dirty water excellent habitat. Since a hydrilla-choked lake experiences a sharp reduction in bait forage, the weed has become an enemy of fish and fishermen alike. During the worst of Lake Conroe's infestation (1978-81), for instance, bass were observed to take three years and longer to reach the 10" size formerly typical of two-year-olds.

So far, a number of measures have been taken to control the spread of the plant. Boaters have been educated to thoroughly wash their equipment, since even a tiny, dried-up sprout is enough to start a new hydrilla colony. Chemical herbicides have been used, although some are also quite toxic to fish. The best approach seems to have been the (so far experimental) introduction of Chinese grass carp. These fish

have already succeeded in almost completely eliminating hydrilla (and maybe other plants) from Lake Conroe.

Reservations about the carp spring from their voracious appetite. Some believe that the carp's success is responsible for the recent scarcity of ducks at Lake Conroe. If these fish, which cannot breed in lakes, should become established in the Trinity River, their high tolerance of brackish water could mean a reduction in the grassy habitats needed by shrimp and young game fish in Galveston Bay. Many questions relating to the carp should begin to find answers as scientific studies are completed. A soon-to-be-released report by Texas A&M's Department of Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences, for instance, focuses directly on the Lake Conroe experiment and will discuss the general impact of the carp on the reservoir ecosystem.

LOOSE HOOKS

The fine crowd of 30 TFFers who attended the Joe Robinson seminar in March had a great time and learned a lot. Joe always does a fantastic job when he visits this club. We hope he returns soon.

In the "Oops!" department, we apologize to John Beck for not mentioning in time the annual meeting of the National Fishing Lure Collectors Club, of which John is a member. We'll do better next year, John.

If you're out north near the Woodlands, stop in at the Buck and Duck Hunting Co. at 25701 IH-45 North #3. This beautiful and unusual store carries fly-fishing equipment and is well worth a look.

The Wind Knots deadline works in our favor this month. This issue will come out too late to plug the Sunfish Spectacular and is being written too early to know the results. If you want our prediction on the winner, it's Jim Bridges.

Think we're done with foolishness for this year? Not so. The annual Austin Angler Perch-off (granddaddy of our own Sunfish Spectacular) is scheduled for May 15th. Call The Angler for details.

The winner of the Name Of The Month award for April is saltwater guide Wade Dunkin.

Tying Tips

by: Mitch Whitney

This month's tip comes from the multi-talented Norm (Lack O'Hackle) Crook, a tier's tyer from the old school.

Experiencing difficulty in palmering a hackle? It either slips off the body down the hook bend or bunches up over the hook point? On wet flies or streamers tie the hackle in by its tip, above the hook point. Next apply the dubbing to the tying thread or if using chenille, tie it in. Then wind one or two tight turns of your body material behind the hackle to prevent the hackle from slipping "Round the Bend." Wind the body material forward. Wind the hackle forward in a firm, evenly spaced spiral. It takes a little practice but you'll be pleased with the results.

Norm Crook

On The Salty Side



by: **Eliot Tucker**

More Recipes

Pescado al Mojo de Ajo

- 1) Trout (or small reds) that have been scaled and cleaned but neither skinned nor filleted.
- 2) Butter.
- 3) Salt.
- 4) Pepper.
- 5) Fresh garlic cloves, finely chopped.
- 6) Limes

Deeply score the fish on both sides. Salt and pepper to taste. In the pan in which you are going to broil the fish, saute the finely chopped garlic cloves in butter until the garlic breaks down. Roll the fish in the butter and garlic so that both sides are well coated. Broil at 500 degrees close to the heat, watching closely and frequently, until the fish is white to the center. There should be a few burned spots on the skin. Turn and do the same with the other side. Baste both sides with a sauce of butter and lime juice while cooking.

Remember to be careful of bones when eating.

Trout or Redfish Meuniere

- 1) Fillets
- 2) Salt
- 3) Pepper
- 4) Butter - several sticks
- 5) Lemons

- 6) Flour
- 7) Fresh parsley, chopped.

Dry the fillets on a paper towel. Salt and pepper the flour. I like a lot of pepper.

Dredge the fillets in the flour so that they are completely but lightly covered.

Heat the butter in a skillet and when hot, saute the fillets, until very brown and crusty on both sides. Four minutes for the first side and three for the second is a guide if the butter is very hot. Let the look of the fillets, very brown and crusty, be your guide. Add butter during cooking as needed.

Remove the fillets and place them on an oven-warmed platter.

Salt and pepper the fillets. Heat a little more butter and when it is hot, pour the juice of 1 or 2 lemons into the butter, swirl it quickly once with a spatula. In a quick moment, it will bubble up or fizz. When it does, lift the skillet and pour its contents on the platter of fish. Sprinkle the fish with the chopped parsley for color, and serve.

Fishing News (cont'd.)

fishing convinced them that they were a month early, but everybody caught some fish and had a good time.

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Call in your fishing news to Ken Jacoby at 873-6210 (o) or 409-273-2991 (h).

Want Ads

Ray Brauer is offering for sale an Orvis CFO #8 reel and an extra spool with line and backing. The reel has only been fished once, and the extra spool has never been used. Ray is asking \$150.00, an excellent bargain. Call Ray at 795-5952 (o) or 467-4142 (h).

Back Casts

(As a companion piece to Cameron Armstrong's Conservation Corner article on Hydrilla, we are running this story which appeared originally in the Summer 1985 issue of *The Flyfisher* magazine.)

Carping

By: *Ken Jacoby*

The Texas Flyfishers are divided into three parts, and this time the most laid-back faction, those who chase the black bass, were the ones who lost something valuable. Unlike their salt and cold water cohorts -- who are accustomed to bad news in the form of winter kills, oil slicks, and pollution problems -- bass fishers in south Texas have been spoiled by improving conditions in the form of new lakes and bigger bass, and were thus ill-prepared to have some quality fishing taken away. Well, not taken away exactly. What happened was, some fish ate it.

Three years ago, in order to provide property owners, boaters, and skiers with more open water, thousands of grass carp (white amur) were introduced as living weed eaters into Lake Conroe, a 20 mile-long, pine-clad beauty an hour north of Houston. Since that time, the amur have grazed the hydrilla to the extent that not a sprig of the weed is visible in the once-matted lake.

Mission accomplished, right? Yes, except that the hydrilla had provided cover for bass in the hard-fished lake. Husky largemouth had hung shallow -- over and around the hydrilla beds -- in easy range of Whitlock Water Pups and Dahlberg Divers. Now, with the weeds gone, bass were sulking in deep water and Texas Flyfishers were sulking in Houston.

Like the optimistic child who found a mound of manure under his Christmas tree and was certain there was a new pony around somewhere, Dan Edwards, an expert Conroe area fly fisher, was searching for something positive in the new, weedless situation. After a time, word began to filter down from Conroe that Edwards and several of his cronies were beginning to catch grass carp on flies; and these fish, after three years of prodigious hydrilla munching, now weighed from 10 to 30 pounds.

These reports at first fell on doubting ears; but increasing numbers of Texas Flyfishers began to slip off to fish with Dan, and although not all of them were

Book Reviews



by: John Hannah

Cork on the Water. by Macdonald Hastings. Random House, 1951.

Don't be misled, from this book's title, into thinking it's about bait fishing. Cork is the name of the hero, Montague Cork, who is an insurance investigator looking into a suspected murder on a Scottish salmon river. So the book is a murder mystery, and the fishing in the river is fly fishing.

I first learned about this book from a letter-to-the-editor in *Rod and Reel*. The writer of the letter was Joe Wilcox, who, because he is not famed for his reticence, has earned the nickname "The Mouth of Michigan." In his letter Wilcox was fulminating against another novel and recommended that if anglers were interested in some really good angling fiction, they should read Cork on the Water. And because one of the worst books I ever read was a flyfishing murder mystery, I tracked down Hastings' book to see if The Mouth spoke the truth.

He did. This book is comparable in suspense to John Buchan's Thirty-Nine Steps, a book I've always liked because its hero is named Hannah, and which shares some of the same setting: north Scotland. Cork on the Water opens with a bang-up, five-page account of an angler's battle with a huge salmon -- you know that the author must have once "been there." Hastings wrote oth-

er books about the outdoors, but as far as I can determine this is his only novel.

Hastings's descriptions of his fictitious river Edendale and of the terrain of the real country Sutherland are vivid. The guests in the Estuary Hotel at the river's mouth are a typical murder-mystery mix. The story moves engrossingly toward its denouement: the murderer is brought to justice and a second great fish, to the hero's gaff.

If a mystery fan in the club would like to read this book, I'll be glad to lend it out.

The Prez Sez



by: John Scarborough

As the Czar of this outfit I want to order each one of you to get involved in some of the many activities offered by our club. There is so much to be gained in knowledge, enjoyment, and fellowship if you take an active part in this great organization that I really get enthusiastic when I think about it. If you'd like to learn more about this club, or would like to give me your opinions, call me. I'd like to hear from you - especially the new members.

Back Casts (cont'd.)

keen on being identified with carp fishing, they brought back verification.

So it was that a calm daybreak found a bass boat with fly fishers aboard, in search of the wily and powerful white amur. Edwards was explaining his new technique to two FFF Directors, Brooks Bouldin and Norm Crook, both wearing ski masks to preserve their anonymity. He handed each man a green deer-hair bug, a

grass pattern: the St. Augustine Emerger.

"This fishing is best in warm weather, when the fish are shallow. I like it in the morning when the wind is down. Calm water means a tight chum line, which leads to the competitive feeding we need."

They anchored near a lakeside golf course where the amur come to breakfast on grass thrown into the lake each morning after greens are mowed. From six plastic garbage bags on board, Edwards began tossing lawn clippings into the calm water. He was forming a chum line which extended increasingly farther from the boat.

"It will help," he said, "if one of you can make a sound like a lawn mower."

Then suddenly the fish were there; at first a few, then more, then a hundred of the brutes cruising the surface like overgrown Lake Hebgen gulpers. Their heads were mostly out of the water, their open mouths looking like hoses as they moved slowly along, sipping the grass in the chum line.

"Don't cast yet," advised Dan. "They're as spooky as bonefish. Wait till they start competitive feeding."

As the feeding became frenzied, the signal was given and casting began. Someone had an immediate hit, reared back, and the ten pound leader snapped with a loud "crack!"

"Easy, man. You've got to go easy with these monsters. They're more like salmon than carp."

Another angler hung one, and the fish, on a long, straight, reel-clattering run, was well into the backing in a moment. Out 100 yards from the boat the powerful amur worked hard against the bent rod. After some line had been won back, the fish made another strong run. Some 20 minutes later, the white amur was in the net.

"Gentlemen, the Texas salmon," beamed Edwards as he gazed fondly at the 20-pounder.

On the way home, an observer had to admit that, yes, a new fly-fishing technique had been developed. Was Dan Edwards to become the Theodore Gordon of the grass carp? Perhaps Ernest Schwiebert would write a book entitled *Grassing The Hatch*. Would Gary Berger, wearing that hat with the chin strap, appear on video tape casting a St. Augustine Emerger at feeding amur? Not likely. But this fishing was fun; it hurt nobody; and it turned a negative into a positive.

And you guys in the back seat -- take off those ski masks. We're almost home.

Fit To Be Tied

Gerbubble Hair Bug

In an earlier day, Tom Love, a bass bugger from Baltimore with an inventive mind, created a creature in the late 1920's which he called a "Gerbubble." It was made of wood and hen feathers. So great was this creation at taking bass, that it became a favorite of Joe Brooks. Nearly 50 years later, one of our contemporary tying masters, Dave Whitlock, recreated this great bug with deer hair. Its ability to take bass today is as good, if not better, than its progenitor. In Dave's words, "Bass go nuts over it when it is used with a soft cast and a wait-twitch-wait retrieve."

Here for your enjoyment is the "Gerbubble Hair Bug." For material you'll need stinger hooks in sizes from 2 through 10, black monocord thread, deer body hair (color is your choice), soft neck hackle butts (natural or dyed grizzly), and hard monofilament for a weed guard.



by:

Norm (Lack O'Hackle) Crook



1. Attach thread to shank above the hook point. Tie in 4 hackles, 1-1/2 times the shank length, with dull side facing outward on both sides. Tie in another hackle, dry fly style, with the concave side facing forward.



2. Wind the single hackle 5 or 6 turns over the tail hackle butts to form a collar. Tie off.



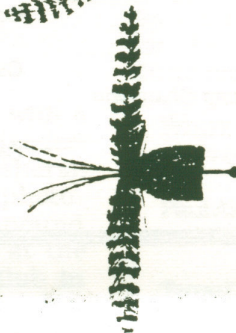
3. Tie in 2 more soft, webby neck hackles - one on either side for whisker wings. Tie in, dull side down. (For a fuller look, use 2 hackles on each side.)



4. Cut, clean and trim deer body hair. Tie in and spin several clumps. Compact well. Cover 3/4 the length of the shank. Add 2 or 3 half hitches. Cement.



5. Remove hook from the vise, trim bottom of deer hair body flat. Then round the top.



6. Trim sides bullet shape.



7. Pull whisker wings forward, parallel to the hook shank, through the deer hair on each side, and tie off on top of hook.



8. Spin another clump or two of deer hair in front of whisker wing, tie off, half hitch, trim, whip finish and tie off.

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TFF EVENTS CALENDAR

WHEN & WHO

WHAT

WHERE

April 23 - 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Orvis Staff and Guests

Orvis Mini-Conclave

The Orvis Store
 Houston, TX

April 26 - 7:00 p.m.
Dan Edwards

Club Meeting
 "Trout Fishing in Chile"

Viscount Hotel

May 12 - 7:00 p.m.
Mitch Whitney

Intermediate Fly Tying
 "Spinning Deer Hair"

St. John's Church
 Room 010, Ed. Bldg.

May 14

Colorado River Canoe Outing

May 21 - 9:00 a.m. - Noon
Steve Rajeff, National Casting Champion

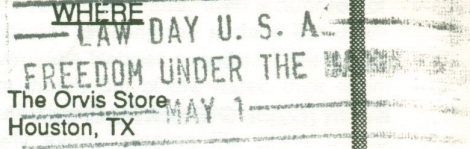
Casting Seminar

The Angler's Edge
 8450 Westpark #103

May 31 - 7:00 p.m.

Club Meeting

Viscount Hotel



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