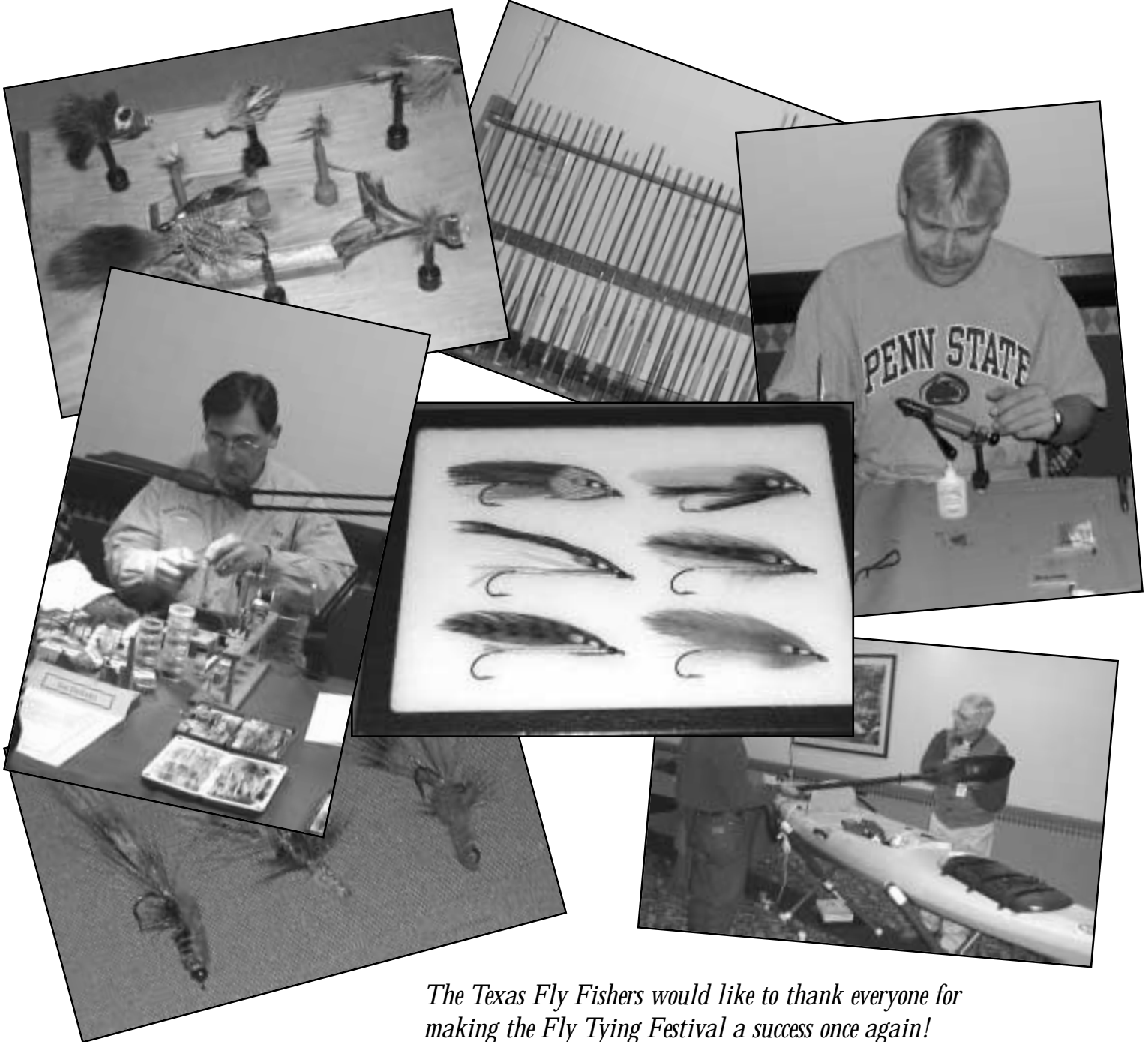


Wind Knots

A Monthly Publication of the Texas Fly Fishers

Vol. 21 / Issue 3 April 2002



The Texas Fly Fishers would like to thank everyone for making the Fly Tying Festival a success once again!

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY MIKE EBERHARD
President, Texas Fly Fishers

Boy, these articles are hard to write when you don't have any fishing experiences to talk about or glean ideas. I'll bet they are also pretty boring to read. I am an avid reader of the fishing web pages and even these are pretty well dried up. My friend Jerry Loring assures me that the fishing will pick up by the end of March. Once we get out of the current frontal weather pattern that drops the water levels and bay temperatures dramatically, we should start seeing our "normal" fish concentrations. Mark "mayor" Marmon is currently specializing in casting

lessons in 40mph winds or greater. Any one wishing to learn to accomplish this feat with a 4 wt. Rod should contact Mark.

On another note, the club has some new and exciting things happening in the near future. We have decided to begin a TFF Academy. The academy will primarily be aimed at the beginning fly fisher. There will be clinics held on equipment, casting, fresh and saltwater fishing, as well as our traditional fly tying activities. This will be a new and exciting opportunity for those who are interested in getting started

in the sport, and hopefully increase membership and interest in the club. If you know someone who is interest in learning or just want to lend a hand, give Tom Lyons a call and he can give you additional information.

David Murrell, Saltwater Outings Chairman, has several outing planned for the upcoming months so be sure and check out the upcoming events and give him a ring to let him know you are interested.

...The Pres

U p c o m i n g E v e n t s

NOTICE:

For those interested in taking the *Intermediate Flytying course*, registration and the first class will be at 6:30 p.m. on **March 14**, at the Bethany Christian Church. We still have room for a few more students. For more information, contact Frank Schlicht at 281-437-6915 (The church is on Westheimer between Buffalo Speedway and Kirby - east of Lamar High School).

Saturday Mornings

Beginners Casting Classes are now being held at **Lakes of Meyer Park**, starting at 1:00 p.m. rather than early morning. Please register with Troy Miller at TroyMiller@ev1.net.

March 23, 2002

There is a **March Saltwater Outing** being planned. Contact David Murrell for more info.

March 26, 2002

The **monthly meeting** featuring **Marcus & Johnny** with a presentation on the *Guides of Texas*.

April 13, 2002

Saltwater Outing in **Port O'Conner**. Contact David Murrell for more information.

April 30, 2002

The **monthly meeting** featuring **Guide Randy Charba** with a presentation on the *Middle Coast*.

May 18, 2002

Saltwater outing, location to be announced.

May 28, 2002

The **monthly meeting** featuring **Scott & Kathy Sparrow** with a presentation on the *Arroyo City Kingfisher Inn*.

June 15-16, 2002

Saltwater Outing in **South Padre**. Contact David Murrell for more info.

June 25, 2002

The **monthly meeting** featuring **Rob Woodruff** with a presentation on the *Pine PT. Lodge*.

July 20, 2002

Saltwater One-Fly. Stay tuned for more details.

July 30, 2002

The **monthly meeting** featuring **Camilo Chavez** with a presentation on the *"Sea Center"*.

August 27, 2002

The **monthly meeting** featuring **Lance Robinson** from TPWD with a presentation on *current issues*.

September 24, 2002

The **monthly meeting** featuring **Bev Edwards** with a presentation for *Bass Fishing on the Cheap*.



Orvis Houston
5848 Westheimer Rd.,
Houston, TX, 77057
713-783-2111

YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL PICK YOUR FRUIT

Thirteen years to the day on which Galveston suffered a significant winter fish kill, TPWD hosted a lecture and Q & A session regarding possible changes in regulations for Speckled Trout. The goal of the evening was to gain valuable public feedback and to present their data summarizing the current status of the fishery. Those in attendance were baitcamp owners, numerous guides, and many individual anglers. From TPWD were Hal Osbourne, Coastal Fisheries Director and Lance Robinson from the Seabrook office.

Mr. Osbourne's presentation began with a statement that there is no current biological information to suggest a change in current trout regulations is necessary. He then delved into specific conditions of the trout population. Highlights of the presentation were both plentiful and interesting. Examples: An overwhelming proportion of the trout population is smaller than 15 inches. The total number of trout over 25 inches has steadily decreased since 1982. Data demonstrates that larger trout tend to be females. Mr. Osbourne was quick to point out that not all trout over 25 inches are female. (TPWD has netted male trout as long as 25 inches.) Since identification of male/female trout is nearly impossible on the water, it's best to play percentages. However, male trout will croak at times. But, Lance cautioned anglers to not rely on this measure as a means of positively identifying a trout as either male or female. And according to current creel samples and gill net surveys Galveston Bay is capable of sustaining a higher population of trout.

Other issues related to trout were discussed and all these topics were

expressed concerns from the audience. For example: live bait vs. lures, and their respective impacts on large trout. To be blunt, how has the use of live croakers effected the number of large trout? Sociological changes were discussed as well. This would include: more people fishing now than ever in Texas, more guides than ever, shifts in demographics, and constant improvements in technology and information availability. Although many viewed these as important issues, the topics were not thoroughly evaluated insofar as impact and how these problems should be addressed. Be on the lookout for these topics in future meetings.

To revisit the topic, CCA has presented a cause for TPWD to change the current trout regulation to a 16 inch minimum length, and the retention of only one fish per day exceeding 25 inches. Support for the data has validity. Mr. Osbourne stated that a 16 inch trout weighs 27% more than a 15 inch trout. Also, females spawn most prolifically when measuring near 14 inches. The additional one inch increase should give more spawning time for females. For this reason, a reduction in the minimum length was not discussed. However, raising the length begged the question about trout's survival rates following release. There remains much contention on this issue. TPWD says trout, although fragile, can survive if handled properly. Many of those in attendance disagreed. Subsequent points concerned how the "average" fisherman handles a fish. The perception of this fisherman is as one who practices the squeeze-and-release method. The mortality issue seems to be the point of contention for most of those opposed to changes.

The next step in the process is for TPWD to organize a task force. The task force will be made up of 30 people. They will be taught by TPWD representatives as to their tasks. The hope is that the task force will relay valuable information about trout and how to best handle/release them. This will be followed by an additional six meetings throughout the coming year coupled with the task force's findings. The task force members will be asked to attend each of these meetings. And when it's all said and done, TPWD will make a decision based on the counsel of Mr. Osbourne, the task force's report, current fisheries information, and a host of other group's suggestions, and the public's opinions. The task is daunting and will take at least a year to be concluded. Mr. Osbourne said that if a change were to occur, it would not go into effect until at least the beginning of the 2003 season.

What is a sufficient outcome? Many are saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." There's a kernel of truth in those words. However, should preparations be made for the future? There is good reason to believe that with how heavily big fish are sought, coupled with no current sign of the pressure abating, it may be wise to plan ahead. The best thing we have to go on is the data from TPWD. Many contend their information is inaccurate. This issue has many caveats, one being no more important than another, and where this finishes is only a guess at this early point. Time reveals all things.

*Dave M. Behr
flytide@ev1.net*

Get a Grip!

by Troy Miller

We are perpetually bombarded with news of the latest and greatest in fly gear. Rods, reels, lines, and leaders that we couldn't bear to live without. I'd like to begin a series of articles discussing specific features of our equipment and how to derive maximum benefit from this technology.

What is the first physical contact we make with a flyrod? The grip, or handle is where most flyfishers will invariably pick up a rod to check it out. You know, you walk into Miller's Fly Shop, straight to the rod rack, and your eyes glaze over. As soon as you blink a few times to clear your vision, you find one that you just gotta give the wiggle test to. You look up to make sure you don't whack it into any beams or ductwork along the ceiling, then go through your established ritual. Is it stiff or soft? Where does it seem to load? How fast does it dampen? Is it worth a second date with a parking lot line?

Many flyfishers don't pay much attention to the grip itself in terms of material or shape. This is largely because today's rod manufacturers make some sensible choices, saving us from our own ineptitude. A few examples. Anyone remember those horrid foam grips that were used on many of the "Cheap-Mart" rods 20-odd years ago? Why don't we suffer with them anymore? They soaked up a pint of water (they are sponges for all practical purposes), they felt "mushy" in hand, and sacrificed too much feel. To top it off, they started crumbling after a couple years of normal use. So we still see Flor-grade Portuguese cork on all but the lowest grade rods. Although very expensive, quality cork will last through a lifetime of hard use.

What about the shape of the grip? Why is there so much variation? The modern word would be "ergonomics". This is the connection point between the caster and rod. This is where all the magic takes place. Where the rubber meets the road. If a grip is not comfortable to the caster, he probably will not like the rod, even if it really is a dandy. How do you figure out what is the best grip for you? Get out there and try every configuration you can find, no matter how goofy it looks. Looks can be deceiving!

There actually is some logic to why certain rods tend to have specific types of grips. Lighter rods in the 2- to 5-weight range are generally used for delicate, accurate presentations. Brute force is not generally required. On these rods you will usually find a cigar or superfine type grip, which responds better to a softer casting stroke and allows pinpoint loop control. Further, the rod can be gripped further up or down to balance with the reel being used. Want a super accurate delivery with your light rods? Experiment with the "index finger on top" grip. You may come to love it. Point at the target, and the fly is there!

On heavier rods, say over an 8-weight, you are most likely to find a full wells grip. There is also a reason for this. During a stiff-wristed casting stroke, the application of power occurs largely between the heel of the hand and at the thumb. The dramatic swells at the ends of the full wells provide solid positions to transfer this energy to the grip, and thus the rod. The thumb will not be prone to sliding on the cork during the stroke, due to the angled ramp that the thumb is pushing against. The enlarged center portion of the full wells allows contact with the palm even with the hand in its normal gripping position. To prove it to yourself, take some modeling clay

and squeeze it into a "pretend" rod grip. Look familiar?

Mid-weight rods often have grips that combine features from the lighter and heavier weights. A compromise to satisfy a variety of uses. Common styles may be called Western or reversed half wells. Accuracy and distance are both important in the middle weights.

There are other grip designs which are important toward the rod's intended application. For instance, why is that fighting butt so long on that 15 foot long spey rod? That's no fighting butt – that's the lower grip which is necessary for the two-handed grip that will be used by the spey caster. And why is there another cork grip between the primary grip and the stripper guide on that 14 weight rod? It's not there so much for casting as for fish fighting. Hook into a 150 pound yellowfin tuna and tell me how many hands you want on that rod! But you never want to grab the rod blank above the grip; the rod may shatter right at your hand due to overstressing it at the point. These are specialty grips, for specialty rods. You may not run across any of them here in south Texas, but if you do, you'll know what they are for.

If your rodmaker has done his job, the grip will feel very natural in your hand. Of course you will be casting any rod that you intend to purchase, to be sure it will perform in a way which compliments your casting style. One of the criteria should be that you can effectively communicate with the rod and line at all times. This is the primary function of the grip. Building your own rod or purchasing a custom rod will allow you to select the grip that works best for you, if standard shapes aren't comfortable. Always remember, "Form Follows Function"! Sorry, I'm an engineer, not an artist.

NEW TFF ACADEMY

Starting on May 23, 2002, we will combine all the fly fishing training activities now conducted by the club and two more we will be adding into a single package called the Academy. We are, by virtue of our non profit status, an educational club and this effort fits well into that design. We intend to run our new Academy every year and plan to aim it at the less experienced or new fly fisher. Our first schedule will be as follows:

Classroom Presentations

May 23 Academy opening and training on fly fishing equipmet

May 30 Fly fishing knots and the set up of outfits from scratch

June 6 Freshwater fly fishing techniques

June 13 Saltwater fly fishing techniques

Fly Casting Training

June 20

June 27

July 11

Hands On Training in Fly Fishing

Bass Outings(July and August)

Saltwater Outings(August and September)

Freshwater Trout Outings(November and December)

Fly Tying Training

Beginners Class - January and February

Intermediate Class - March

Anybody is eligible for the Training but we are limiting the first class to

20 people. We will fill the class on a first come, first served basis but preference will be given to Paid club members. The fee for participation in the training will be \$25.00. These funds will be applied to paying for supplies and to covering the cost of the classroom space. We will have all the indoor training at the Bethany Church. Troy Miller will conduct the Fly Casting training at the location he has been using.

Anyone interested in this training should call Tom Lyons At 281 379 7944 to enroll.



Another nice Guad trout.

Antique Fishing Show

An entertaining show that most TFF members would enjoy is the Houston Fishing Lure Show and Sale. This is actually show for collectors of antique and rare fishing equipment and lures. There are usually about 100 exhibitors with that many tables full of "stuff" for your viewing.

If you are interested in buying that old bamboo fly rod, this show is a good opportunity. You won't be taken because of the many experts available to advise you if it is a

\$25.00 rod or a \$1,500.00 rod.

There will be reels, rods, lures, and fishing tackle of every type and age you can imagine.

Ben Kocian, a local artist, is one of the sponsors and is also a true expert on appraising fishing tackle. He can be reached at 713/666-1966 if you have something you think may be of value. Ben specializes in old lures but he gives free advise on everything.

The date is May11th. Location is the Crowne Plaza Hotel at 12801

NW Frwy. Time is from 8 AM to 3 PM. Admission is \$5 and kids are free.



1141-05 Uptown
Parkway Blvd
Houston, Texas 77056
713-993-9981

15% off of all
Fly-tying Materials for
all TFF Members.

NEAR TOWN

*Saltwater
Fly Fishing*

by Captain Chris Phillips

**Spring
Edition
2002**

Hey folks, sorry I missed you over the last couple of months. Let's just agree that the fishing has been slow and I've been gathering my thoughts. I am the eternal optimist, but I must say that early Spring fly fishing in Galveston Bay can be tough. The late surge of winter this year hasn't helped either. During any typical Spring, the days in which we want to go fishing are plagued by poor weather, be it incessant winds or runoff from Spring rains. If our choices were not already limited enough, the fish move around so much looking for scarce bait, that their habits are less predictable. They often cruise rather than feed methodically as they do in Summer and Fall. That being said, fish still can be caught if you play your cards right. Summertime flats style fishing will not usually be very productive at this time of year unless you're lucky enough to find a pocket of bait

and feeding fish. More often than not, fish are on the move, covering expanses of water in their search for food. If you get lucky and do find fish, don't blow that first cast.

In Spring, school trout are usually in deeper water over shell but move in shallower as the water warms. Monster sow trout can be found on the flats, but catching one on a fly rod requires much patience and skill. Large flies are on their menu, especially top waters, but these flies are difficult to cast long distances and usually require heavier rods. Unfortunately, targeting large trout while wading really does require frequent long distance casts to improve your odds. I am not going to lie to you. Its tough at the best of times but it can be done I should add that if you do hook up, you'll never forget it and I warn you, its kind of addictive. Your chances can dramatically improve by choosing the right flat at the right time. Temperature, clarity of water and tidal stage are more important than time of the day. Look for a decent flood tide with light, southerly winds and water temperatures of 62 degrees or warmer. Such conditions are usually found before or well after a cold front. The south shorelines of lower East Bay, West Bay or Christmas Bay should have clean water during periods of light to moderate southerly winds. However, if we get a stretch of four or five days of mild weather with reasonable tides and a light Northerly wind, head to the north shoreline and look for clean water with bait. Typically, light Northerlies can be found during and right after weak fronts, and for my money, are the best times to look for big trout.

Whenever fishing for large trout, you are limited to one of two strategies. If you don't have access to good poling boat, prepare yourself for a marathon of casting and wading, and move around. A decent riding boat that can handle a fair chop will dramatically improve your chances in Galveston Bay, whether wading or poling. If wading, more often than not you will have to prospect the waters, making long casts along the flats in chest to waist deep water and towards the shorelines. Spread your casts around, since the trout will likely be cruising. I prefer a clear intermediate sink line with large deceivers. Large trout tend to prey on fairly large bait fish, such as mullet in the eight to twelve inch range. If you see plenty of mullet in this size range, work that flat. Jump in the boat and try somewhere else if the area does not have enough bait to inspire confidence. Its as simple as that. If you don't have a boat, make some friends at the club. Many of these folk have boats and are great people to know anyway. Offering a little gas money and bringing extra food, flies and especially beer can go a long way towards repeat trips, or so I'm told.

If you have a poling boat, your chances of seeing and catching fish are dramatically improved. Find good water and simply pole the flats until you see fish, close in and then have whoever is up make the cast. Make sure the person fishing has already made a few casts before you begin to pole, and that his or her line is stretched out and neatly piled. Don't pull line directly from your reel and pile it on the deck. The longer the fly line has been sitting on your reel and the colder the water, the more important it is to

stretch the memory out of the line. It won't shoot until you do. Unless you're lazy like me, a little pre-fishing preparation with line cleaner/preserver is in order. You may only get one shot at each fish or pod of fish that you see and if my warnings haven't sunk in yet, prepare to learn by experience. Good polarized glasses and a tall poling platform are essential to sighting fish, if that isn't already obvious.

For those of you new at the poling business, it is similar to sailing. Never pole directly into the wind. Hold the pole at your hip, always on the down wind side, like a sail. Ease the boat along, tacking against the wind if you cannot pole with it. Don't be in a hurry or you will turn the boat in circles or even worse, do some unscheduled wading. When on the platform, keep both feet widely spaced and facing forwards, with your body facing forwards. Poling is a skill that requires experience. In the beginning you will become tired easily, fighting to keep your balance. Frequent switching with your buddy may be necessary. As your balance improves, so will your stamina. Unfortunately, poling skiffs have yet to gain popularity on our coast. On one hand, that's a pity because they can't be beat for finding fish and working the flats. On the other, I'm not really sure I want lure and bait chunkers to know this. Contrary to what some of you may think, its just as exciting to locate and put your buddy on a fish as it is to catch one yourself. After the day is done, you and your buddy will see and catch more fish and still have an arm to fish with the next day. The only drawbacks are that the third wheel will have to be dropped off to do some wading (and that is not neces-

sarily a drawback), and many good poling skiffs are not designed to handle rough water like our more popular bay boats. However, some manufactures have addressed this latter problem with new lines of hybrid skiffs that can speed through a rough chop safely without breaking your back or damaging the boat, yet still pole relatively easy in under ten inches of water. Technology is an amazing thing.

While we are still marginally on the subject of speckled trout, our conservation officer has asked for opinions on future conservation laws. Since it is such a hot topic, let me add fuel to the fire. I have been fishing and guiding here in Texas for many years and I do take issue with much that has been proposed, said and enacted in the past. I take issue with some of the ideology of our most popular and politically influential conservation groups, although I have and continue to support them. I disagree with many of our well known outdoor news writers, many of whom I have fished with over the years. Before I start my ranting and raving, let me first say that it is OK to disagree, as long as we agree on the ultimate goal, which I believe we all do.

We all want big trout and lots of them. Some of us want to kill lots of trout to take home because we have always been able to do this. The Parks and Wildlife tell us that numbers of smaller trout are the best they have been in years, and that to maintain these numbers, no changes need to be made in the catch limits. If we want larger trout, we may have to tweak limits a little. Our local outdoor sports writers seem ambivalent or unwilling to any real reductions in catch and kill limits. Some

claim that this will drive away fishermen or potential fishermen from the bays, especially those fishermen from inland who don't get down here much, and damage the livelihood of guides. This, for these particular writers, all comes at a time when hunting and fishing are under siege from anti-hunting/anti-fishing lobbies, PETA and other groups out there. Our most vocal and politically powerful conservation groups, which in the last few years have finally joined other calls to limit shrimping and crabbing, echo the sentiments of the outdoor writers (or perhaps it is the other way around.) These groups do deserve our heart felt praise for their enormous success in helping ban or limit nets on most of the East and Gulf Coasts and keeping an ever present eye on the commercial lobby and the National Marine Fisheries people. Somewhat ironically, however, they still seem to believe that the future of coastal fishing is directly proportional to the amount of fish you can keep, a philosophy not too different from the commercial lobbies they oppose. Breeding and stocking programs are no longer directed at reestablishing lost fish stocks, but to provide the public with more fish to keep. Their support for the insane change in the red fish limits (allowing the killing of bull reds and opening up Pandora's box but this is another story) illustrate their ideology. Indirectly, this has created a permanent need for these stocking programs and the very groups that support them, much like the rainbow trout stocking had done to many northern states before the big turn around with Trout Unlimited, the Nature Conservancy and other groups.

My thoughts on the subject of limits are simple. I agree that the best way to preserve our sport is to have future generations who demand it. We all play a part here. However, I believe that more future fishermen will be attracted to the passion (I hesitate to call it a sport) if they are able to catch many fish, especially in a clean and wild environment. I also believe that such future recreational fishermen are far more likely to be politically active advocates than those whose primary focus is to kill as much as they can. Don't get me wrong. While I seldom eat fish myself, I have nothing others against taking a few fish home to eat. On rare occasions, I keep a few fish for friends who enjoy eating them. However, we have to face the fact that our populations continue to grow, and so will the pressure on limited resources. Every move we make now will affect not just future fishing, but future attitudes to the "sport". Sadly, past fisheries legislation has been focused on correcting problems ignored, and not on avoiding problems in the first place. However, I still take my hat off to the Parks and Wildlife. This may be the first time they are not taking a crisis management approach to reducing size limits.

Over the past decade or so, fisheries managers have latched onto an esoteric concept called "maximum sustainable yield" to define critical fish populations. At a basic level, this is some sort of measure of how many fish can we take while still retaining an optimum healthy breeding population to ensure future populations. Sounds good, right? The devil, of course, lies in the details. Just about wherever you care to look in the world, maximum sustainable

yield calculations have been influenced more by politics than hard science, with disastrous results. Many fisheries biologists readily admit that the "hard science" is also fraught with its own difficulties and uncertainty. To throw yet another wrench into the works, on our coast many fish populations vary so much in size and quantity from bay system to bay system, that any single statistic or regulation based upon such a statistic may work for one area but harm another.

As good as the biologists from the Parks and Wildlife think speckled trout populations are now, I remember a time when they were far more plentiful and far larger on average, and yes, I am old. Fishing for speckled trout has been much better in the past. In my experience, the change in speckled trout fishing over the past fifteen or so years in Galveston bay has been from poor to "mediocre". I say this as a guide and fisherman who has logged more time on the water over the years than most. I have been a guide in Galveston Bay for the past 18 years and fished the bay regularly for the past 30 years. My fishing experiences on the upper Texas coast go back about 49 years. For me, the big picture tell a better story than fifteen years or so of dubious statistics from strategically placed nets and occasional boat ramp surveys. There will come a time in the not too distant future when current and proposed regulations will not even sustain mediocre stocks and at any time, severe weather patterns could decimate the fishery. Speckled trout are very prolific, begin breeding at a small size and young age, and can probably be managed at any of a number of size and population levels,

barring a weather related or ecological disaster. The question should not be what is "adequate", but should be what is the best population level for fishing now and in the future. Regulations should ensure not just "adequate" or "mediocre" fishing, but excellent fishing, and not just for guides or others with nice boats who know the sweet spots (like me), but for everyone. Despite the confusion and resentment it may cause, regulations may have to be regional rather than state wide.

Maybe I'm a little less paranoid than our outdoor sport writers since I really don't fear animal rights groups or the anti-everything-except-themselves lobbies. Not that I think we should ignore them, mind you, but I do not think we should play into their hands by being paranoid. I just don't believe that we are in competition with these groups. Sure, we differ in philosophy, but if we pander to extremists by being dogmatic, we risk that label ourselves. They do not want us to kill fish at all. We perceive this as their excess. Yet some of us believe we should allow ourselves to kill as many fish as fish populations can stand, just because we can. Perhaps we should rethink this philosophy.


As part of the recreational fishing community, our money and past actions to conserve fish and their improve their habitats speak far louder than these small but vocal animal rights groups. Our political clout in this country is enormous and growing. Their's is not. For those of you worried about the perceived power of animal rights groups in parts of Europe, your actions are better served in ensuring that we do not become the ecological nightmare that is much of Europe. With their

fisheries decimated through over-exploitation, pollution and destruction of natural ecosystems, its hardly surprising that animal rights groups proliferate. Some folks need an enemy so they don't have to think about other problems. I have better and more interesting things to do than to worry or whip myself into a frenzy over a perceived threat from extremist animal rights groups. Personally, I would rather be seen as a steward of the environment that I love and a staunch advocate for fish and fishing.

Before I wander completely off the topic, let's get back to trout. We need to look at the regulations scientifically and responsibly but changing limits alone will do little to improve populations with this particular species of fish. Speckled trout are very delicate and are likely to die after being caught if handled roughly or hooked deeply. They are not near as tough as redfish. Sometimes it may take speckled trout days to die even if they swim off after release. Any meaningful regulation change must address this issue. Our Parks and Wildlife, conservation groups and even our own club should better educate fishermen. We could all stand some lessons in release techniques. For those that make their money guiding others to this public resource, this is profoundly important. Tackle also plays an extremely significant role in releasing a fish unharmed. For instance, I am a proponent of having live bait guides use barbless circle hooks (because of their design, circle hooks do not really need barbs to hold fish). Treble hooks should have no place in bait fishing. Traditional bait hooks are bad enough, but with a treble hook, a gut or throat hooked

trout is a dead trout. Ironically, barbless circle hooks, the most catch and release friendly of bait hooks, are also the most effective if used properly. I have no problem with treble hooks used on lures. Most fish are usually hooked in the mouth and with release tools such as a Boga Grip and a pair of pliers, they can be returned to the water unharmed. Every guide should use a Boga Grip (or something similar) and/or proper rubber release nets, so that gills and protective slime coats are not damaged and vital organs do not become injured through handling the fish. In fact, the day has come for all serious fishermen to invest in release tools (which make wonderful presents and can be purchased in our store...).

So how many trout should we call a limit? Sure I would like to keep a few fish when it pleases me and I want others to have that right, but I do not need ten, or eight for that matter, whether they are 16 inches with two over 26 inches or not. This is still excess. I do not believe that changing the limit size to 16 inches with a slot limit of two or so for speckled trout over 26 inches (the currently favored proposal) will make much difference to the population either. As far as limits go, a five fish limit with one over 26 inches is more than sufficient for anyone. Trout don't keep well in a freezer anyway. But even these limits will not suffice unless we do more to educate proper release techniques and regulate certain kinds of tackle. Guides would better serve themselves to concentrate more on photography and teaching people how to catch and release fish than helping kill as many fish as possible. For fisherman that drive all the way from Dallas or North Dakota, the trip

home will be much shorter with memories and pictures of dozens of fish caught and released, with a few in the cooler for dinner, than ten trout caught and ten trout killed. I'll bet my bottom dollar that catching a whole bunch of fish will create more return business than killing ten on any day of the week. Anyway, that's what I think. 

Tight Lines and Screaming Reels,

Chris

Captain Chris Phillips is a Galveston Bay and offshore fly fishing guide and can be reached at 1-409-935-0208 or come and see him at Westbank Anglers (across the street from the Galleria Mall at 713 961-3474) for free advice on equipment, flies, destinations or if you just want to talk fishing.

Westbank Anglers

Westbank Anglers Houston
The Centre @ Post Oak
5000 Westheimer #620
Houston, TX 77056
713.961.3474
Fax 713.961.3478

"ANTICIPATION"

Anticipation is the defining word tonight. Tomorrow (Feb.25, 2002) will find me on the Guadalupe. Let the "TFF One Dry Fly" begin a day early for me.

Anticipation equated to a short sleepless night. The rear-view mirrored sunrise found me well on my way. Time to slow the pace and leave the bustled of Interstate 10. Route 90 with its pastoral meandering was more satisfying. Several "Historical Marker-Stops" later... found me sitting on the back-porch of campsite 58.

The Quadalupe looked promising from the campground of Rio Raft. Last nights cold front has brought a blustery cold wind. Tomorrow's forecast should be warmer and hopefully a calmer day for the "One Dry Fly". The evening hatch of mayflies looked

promising, but it had been a "one fish day". The warm smell of supper simmering on the stove... time to anticipate tomorrow and relish today.

Sunrise on the river is always a time of renewal and promise... a time of prayer. The morning chill and a hot cup of coffee, what more could a person want?


A light mist drifts downstream as a covey of ducks launch into the dawn. Another day of fly fishing is about to begin.

Fellow members of the club assemble at the appointed hour. It has been a long drive for most but there is that look of "anticipation". The rules and teams are cast. Sixteen fellows drift off in pairs.

Greg Rhodes and I followed Jerry's advice and headed upstream. After

wading about 40 minutes... Jerry drives up (a secret road) and within minutes is fishing, ahead of us. Humph... it pays to know the lay of the land.

It was a chaste (fancy word) morning for us. Lunch... we now headed downstream. It wasn't long before Greg landed a nice trout. Within minutes he had an even bigger fish on, but it broke free.

Day's end found me fishless ; however, several of the group had a more productive day. We swapped stories and smiles... "TROUT DO NOT LIVE IN UGLY PLACES". (A borrowed quote). Thanks for the memories... It was rewarding... 

Flyboybauer

Fly-fishers are usually brain-workers in society. Along the banks of purling streams, beneath the shadows of umbrageous trees, or in the secluded nooks of charming lakes, they have ever been found, drinking deep of the invigorating forces of nature - giving rest and tone to over-taxed brains and wearied nerves- while gracefully wielding the supple rod, the invisible leader, and the fairy-like fly.

- James A. Henshall, MD, 1855



The Best in Kayaks,
canoes, outdoor clothing,
travel gear and fly fishing equipment

5808 S. Rice Ave
Houston, Texas 77081

FROM RAINBOWS TO REDS

We meet all of your freshwater and saltwater fly fishing needs with the finest equipment and the most informative and courteous service on the Gulf Coast. Seminars and lessons for casting, fishing tactics and fly tying.

FLYWATER
OUTFITTERS

THE COMPLETE FLY SHOP AT CUT RATE FISHING TACKLE
8933 KATY FREEWAY • HOUSTON, TEXAS 77024 • (713)827-7762
10551 TELEPHONE ROAD • HOUSTON, TEXAS 77075 • (713)991-5812

WINDKNOTS INFO

The Texas Fly Fishers monthly newsletter needs your help. Otherwise, we'll run out of material to print. Please send your newsletter contributions to:

Greg Rhodes
335 West 27th
Houston, TX 77008
gregr@pegasusdesign.com
Home: 713-862-5335
Work: 713-690-7878

or

Evan Watkins
610 West Main, S. 101
League City, TX 77573
ebrooks74@aol.com
Home: 281-414-4590
Work: 281-316-3900

All articles, photographs and newsworthy events are appreciated. If you know of any upcoming events other members might be interested in please let us know so we can keep them informed.

Information and articles should be submitted before the second week of each month.

WEBSITE INFO

Please send your pictures, ideas, links, etc... to the TFF webmaster e-mail address listed on the web page at:

<http://www.texasflyfishers.org>

Norbert Burch
TFF Webmaster

Attention:

All previous issues of the *Windknots* publication are now posted online in PDF format for downloading and viewing. Each new *Windknots* will be posted immediately following it's release. Please keep this in mind if you don't receive an issue!

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MIKE EBERHARD
President

Work: 281-367-3411
Home: 713-467-6922
medds@ev1.net

JOE DEFORKE
VP Programs

Work: 713-923-1955
Home: 281-261-7640

RON BAUER
Secretary / Membership

Home: 281-359-7077
flyboybauer@cs.com

BRUCE HEIBERG
Treasurer

Work: 713-623-0381
Home: 281-550-2993
bheiberg@bc-arch.com

JERRY LORING
Auction

Work: 713-819-9050
Home: 713-464-8687
jerrytms@flash.net

NORBERT BURCH
Communication

Work: 281-589-4941
Home: 281-265-5156
tff.webmaster@texasflyfishers.org

DAVE M. BEHR
Conservation

Work: 713-970-8527
Home: 281-480-0722
flytide@mail.ev1.net

FRANK SCHLICHT
Education

Home: 281-437-6915

FLY CASTING

TROY MILLER

Work: 713-466-2370
Home: 979-865-5117
Troy.Miller@bakeroiltools.com

ED RIZZOLO

Fly Tying Festival
Home: 281-997-2789
edrizz@texas.net

COREY RICH
Legal

Work: 713-861-1928
Home: 713-621-6071
corey.rich@aya.yale.edu

T.J. BUTLER
Librarian

Home: 713-768-8444

MARK MARMON
Freshwater Outings

Work: 713-993-9981
Home: 713-666-8868
mcubed@usa.net

DAVID MURRELL
Saltwater Outings

Work: 281-265-6500
Home: 281-870-9156
fisifdm@flash.net

MIKE WILLIS
Special Events

Work: 713 721-4755
Home: 713 223-7041
mwillis@us.ca-ingosuez.com

WINDKNOTS

EVAN WATKINS

Work: 281-316-3900
Home: 281-414-4590
Fax: 281-316-3935
ebrooks74@aol.com

GREG RHODES

Work: 713-690-7878
Home: 713-862-5335
Fax: 713-690-8899
gregr@pegasusdesign.com

RAFFLES & DOOR PRIZES

ED HOGAN

Home: 281-360-3203

SR. ADVISORS AT-LARGE

WRIGHT GUTHRIE

Home: 713-664-0639

JOHN SCARBOROUGH

Home: 713-465-5196

TOM LYONS

Home: 281-379-7944



Texas Fly Fishers
 P.O. Box 571134
 Houston, Texas 77257-1134

NONPROFIT ORG
 US POSTAGE
 PAID
 HOUSTON TX
 PERMIT NO 12712

TEXAS FLY FISHERS MEMBERSHIP FORM

3318 Little Bear, Dr., Kingwood, TX 77339

New Application / Renewal

Attention New and current members! To join or renew please complete this form and mail it with your check to our Post Office Box. New members should prorate their dues to August because everyone renews during that month, or bring this form with you to any of our monthly meetings. Meetings start at 7:00 PM the last Tuesday of every month (except December) at the Holiday Inn, located on the Katy Freeway between Antoine and Silber. Guests are welcome with a complimentary pass to come learn of our numerous outings, instructional classes and social gatherings.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK _____

E-MAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES: REGULAR \$24 FAMILY \$32 STUDENT \$16 FEDERATION FLY FISHERS \$26

ANY QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, RON BAUER 281-359-7077.



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

Sample

TEXAS FLY FISHERS MEMBERSHIP FORM

3318 Little Bear, Dr., Kingwood, TX 77339

New Application / Renewal

Attention New and current members! To join or renew please complete this form and mail it with your check to our Post Office Box. New members should prorate their dues to August because everyone renews during that month, or bring this form with you to any of our monthly meetings. Meetings start at 7:00 PM the last Tuesday of every month (except December) at the Holiday Inn, located on the Katy Freeway between Antoine and Silber. Guests are welcome with a complimentary pass to come learn of our numerous outings, instructional classes and social gatherings.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK _____

E-MAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES: REGULAR \$24 FAMILY \$32 STUDENT \$16 FEDERATION FLY FISHERS \$26

ANY QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, RON BAUER 281-359-7077.