



Cape Fear Flyfishers Meeting Minutes—March 20, 2024

<https://capefearff.com>

President Rick Hettenbach called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM at the St James Community Center. The meeting was preceded at 5:00 PM by another helpful casting clinic led by Rev. Jim White.

NEW MEMBERS/VISITORS:

The following gentlemen joined the meeting:

- Dave Deiling of Wilmington. A fly angler for 5 years, he is getting into fly tying as well. He is from Masonboro, KY, in Western KY and had the good fortune to live on a lake.
- John Ammamen (sp?)- John is from Long Island, NY and he is brand new to flyfishing.
- Don Amman- from Long Island
- Daniel C. Pitt from Highland Park IL He is new to flyfishing.
- Kathryn Davis & husband Anthony Lockhart- she has always wanted to learn how to fly fish. Anthony is interested as well.

FLY Raffle:

Paul Askew administered the fly drawing and a winner was selected.

TREASURERS REPORT

Doug Donaldson reported that we did not have much financial activity last month. The Club did donate \$100 to the St. James Wounded Warrior Golf Tournament in April. We will be recognized with a sign somewhere at the tournament. After reserves for known obligations for room rental and members' dues payable to FFI, the Club has about \$3,900 available for other uses. See attached details.

UPCOMING EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 3/30- Kayak Outing. Details to be announced.
- 4/8- Saltwater event. Very high tide that morning. Meet at the Wildlife Ramp on Fish Factory Road around 7:30 am. Kayaks welcome. Need small boats for the marsh.
- 4/13- Casting Clinic at the Dutchman's Creek Park on Fish Factory Road, just beyond the Wildlife Ramp. More details to be announced soon. The hours most likely will be 10:00-noon.
- 4/17- April Meeting featuring a representative of the NC Fish Tagging Program.

- 4/21-24- Spring Mountain Trip. It looks like the decision has been made to stay in Bristol for this trip. The Hampton Inn there is convenient. If you are more a Marriott fan than a Hilton fan, there is also a Fairfield Inn & Suites right next door. If you have not made arrangements for a guide, contact Conner Honea with Elk Creek Outfitters immediately. The South Holston and Watauga rivers are considered among the best tailrace fisheries east of the Mississippi. We hear there may be a caddis hatch while we are there. Top water!
- 5/1-2- Weldon trip for stripers on the Roanoke River. The catch & keep season ends on April 30 so the number of boats on the river will be greatly reduced. A seasoned boat owner is needed to tow one of Jim White's john boats up there so three more people can go without having to hire a guide. Contact Jim at 910-477-0441- cell if interested.
- 6/18- Smallmouth bass trip on the Nolichucky River has been canceled. Only two people signed up and we waited far too late to reserve boats.
- January 2025- there is still some room on a trip to Patagonia. The trip should cost around \$6,000.

Tidal Waters Guide Service Presentation

Capt. Conner Bryant with Tidal Waters Guide Service in the greater Charleston, SC area. He specializes in Fly & Light Tackle fishing. He can be reached at 910-264-0917,

Capt_Conner@TidalWatersGuide.com or the website www.tidalwatersguideservice.com.

Capt. Bryant was born in Wilmington and is a proud member of the Lumbee Indian nation.

Prior to becoming a guide, he worked in Calabash on shrimp boats, served in the Coast Guard for 10 years and was a law enforcement officer in Virginia before becoming a guide. He runs a Hell's Bay Skiff.

His presentation focused on the seasons of the year and what fishing is like during that season.

Winter

Winter is a lovely season. There are no shark or mosquitos. Red drum are there all year and with the clear, cool water of winter, sight fishing to fish you can see adds an extra dimension to fishing for red drum. Also, the reds school up into schools up to 100-300 fish, The fishing is best during low tide because the reds are restricted to certain areas. Low tide is the time to catch fish since they are so limited as to where they can go.

Also, the smaller reds tolerate cold better than the large ones so they will fight better than the larger fish, which will be lethargic. Winter time is "hit or miss" fishing. It is also a good time for topwater lures, flies and other baits.

Spring

By now we are ready for Spring. Of course there are changes taking place. There are some sharks, some monster mullet and fish are more active. The bait is back and our focus is on fronts and winds. One of Capt. Bryant's favorites is the Bonnethead shark, not to mention speckled trout. Flounders are back. The huge schools of red drum are breaking up. This year, Spring is running about a month ahead of normal. The wind often runs around 20 mph in Spring and the Captain says he will fish until the winds get up to 30 mph. You can often hide

from the wind but the ride out and back will be bumpy. The Double Haul becomes essential for the fly caster.

When asked how far one must be able to cast to fish with him, the Capt. replied that if you can give him a good 40' cast, he is happy- and not more than 3 false casts.

Summer

Everything is in during summer. You can fish inshore, off the beach and out to about 5 miles. Tarpon are around. They can be very picky, challenging but lethargic. Bonnethead sharks need a 10-wt. rod, though an 8-wt works well for smaller fish. Bonnethead shark eat some vegetation and some crabs so they can be good to eat.

You can bring your own gear but he prefers you use his. Thus, if you break a rod you will break one of his and both Orvis and Temple Fork Outfitters treat him right in fixing broken rods. He will get better and cheaper service.

Cobia are around in summer. So are reds. Reds are all catch and release- always.

During flood tides, reds will be in the marsh feeding on small crabs and sticking their tails in the air. During the summer, Capt. Bryant can have three charters per day.

Fall

There are lots of flood tides during the Fall. The fish are active & happy. Flood tides and lows tides use lots of deer and crab hair. Visibility is often adequate, despite the humidity. 15-50 fish are good hauls and quite possible.

Many anglers will catch between 15-50 fish.

Gear

In flooded marsh, 6-to 7- or 8-wt. In wind 8-wt.

Uses Floating line with a 10-12' leader using 35 lb test, 25 lb test to 15 lb test tapered leader. He uses a long 15 lb, test tippet and likes Mono leaders a for top water. Fluorocarbon line tends to sink so does not use it for top water flies. He uses tropical line and does not use cold water line. Tropical line casts better..

He uses a lot of black in his flies.

Weedguards are essential in the marsh.

Skiff Fishing

He runs a Hell's Bay skiff. Line management while on the bow is essential. One can use tall cans or a variety of specialty products to keep the line in the boat and out of the water where all sorts of things can happen to it [wrapped up in oars or pole or prop or trolling motor] not to mention making it hard to shoot the line on a cast.

Don't use your whole body with a lot of body English when casting- you will go overboard. Be aware of your fly's location when you are casting.

Talk to the guide. Listen to the guide as he/she directs you to the fish.

In saltwater, use a strip set and not a rod set. Lifting the tip of the rod does no good. Its job is to protect the tippet. You lose power when lifting the rod tip. Be prepared to "cane pole" a fish near the boat.

Always fish one angler at a time.

Low tide is a good time to fish since the fish have fewer choices as to where to they are or where they can be.

Stick the fighting butt of you rod into your belt to remind yourself how to fight the fish. Pull the fish at an angle to get it to submit by being slowed down. 40' is an adequate length cast.

The only stupid question is the one not asked. Guides love questions. Let the guide know if you need a break, too.

He had 13 broken rods last year and gets excellent help from Orvis and TFO.

Some clubs devise interesting ways to have tournaments- such a catching the red drum with the most spots.

Charleston, SC has 7-10 good fly shops.

The Tides Hotel at Folly Beach gives a discount if you are there fishing with a guide.

Capt. Bryant was thanked for his excellent presentation and for giving us so much of his time.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned and some members continued discussions at Paul's on Oak Island.

Respectfully submitted,

James W. White, Jr.

Temporary Clerk

Edited by: Dennis Falkenstein

CFF Officers for 2024 are:

Rick Hettenbach -President/Club Officer

Al Roy-Vice President/Club Officer

Doug Donaldson-Treasurer/Club Officer

Dennis Falkenstein-Secretary/Club Officer

Jim White

Steve Moore

Jim Larson

Joe Fetter

Dominick Sangillo

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

Director-Education

Director-Webmaster/Conservation

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

Cape Fear
Flyfishers

Treasurer's Report

(2/21/2024 - 3/19/2024)

Beginning Cash Balance
(2/20/2024)

\$5,728.56

(allows for 2022 gift
of \$2,500)

Activity Since 2/20/2024

Dues Collected \$650.00

Hat Sales \$50.00

Fly Raffle \$10.00

Sale of fishing
equipment (from Clune
collection)

\$55.00

\$765.00

Subtotal:

\$6,493.56

Less Payments:

Paid FFI - prorated
dues for new members -\$23.34

Donation to Wounded
Warrior Golf

Tournament -\$100.00

Other payments (bank
fees, postage, copying) -\$6.48

-\$129.82

Ending Cash Balance

(3/19/2024)

\$6,363.74

Less: Known F/Y 2024

Liabilities:

2024 SJCC Hall Rent - (Annual:
Bal. due \$1,137.25) -\$853.25

FFI Renewal Dues
(7/1/24) -\$1,620.00

Available Uncommitted

Cash

\$3,890.49

Membership Status

YTD 2024

52 Renewals

11 new members

7 not renewing

16 have not renewed

12/31/2023 - 75
Members