

The Jack Sparks Central Texas Flyrodders Club

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Next Meeting:

Tuesday, March 12, 2013

Location:

Waco Wetlands Center

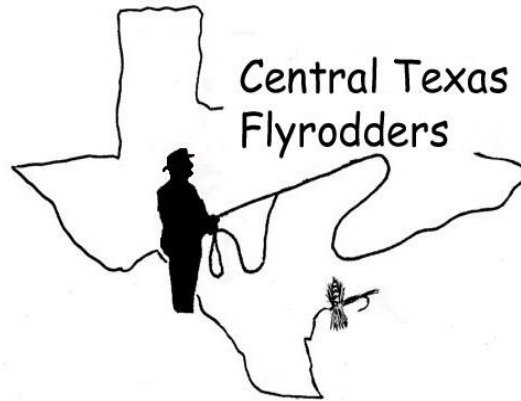
Program:

White Bass Conclave

About 7:00 pm

Fly Tying and Tall Tales

About 6:00 p.m.



MARCH PROGRAM – WHITE BASS CONCLAVE

TPWD Biologist John Tibbs will give us a primer on White Bass biology and behavior which is bound to help us in the pursuit of these fish. Our own White Bass Master, Johnny Elkins will then share some of his secrets. If you have fished with Johnny, fished anywhere near Johnny or just heard of Johnny, we know you will attend this meeting. If you do not qualify for any of the above, trust us, attend this meeting if you want to improve your White Bass fishing. We have had White Bass Conclaves in the past and you always learn something.



White Bass caught near the former Delmar Ranch Road Access

FEBRUARY PROGRAM – GUIDE JUDSON COLE

Guide Judson Cole of Hell 'N Back Outfitters conducted Trout Fishing 101 and 102 at our February meeting. He threw in some specific tips and background on the premier Trout fishery in Texas, the Guadalupe River. Judson concluded his program with information on his warm waters - the Blanco, San Marcos, Colorado and sometimes the Llano.

One of Judson's tips has universal application to those situations where you have to add a split shot to get your fly deeper. To prevent the shot from running down the leader to the fly, add tippet to the end of your leader with a double surgeons knot. Then place the split shot above the knot. This technique is stronger than tying an overhand knot in the leader above the fly to keep the shot from sliding.

Like many guides, Judson is a believer in fishing two streamers at a time. He believes this basically doubles your catch rate. One new idea is to fish a streamer below a nymph. One of Judson's slides showed it looks like a minnow chasing a bug. That ought to get the attention of a larger predator.

Judson gave us an outstanding program. He obviously knew his subjects and communicates well, excellent qualities in a guide. For more information on Judson Cole and Hell 'N Back Outfitters see:

www.centraltexasflyfishing.com

FLY FISHING 101

The first Waco Fly Fishing 101 class is set to begin at 5:30 pm before our March meeting and will end just before our "formal meeting" begins at 7:00 pm. The class is basically full, but we could add one or two if you know somebody that would like to attend. For more information, to register someone for the class or to get involved as an instructor contact Bob Hanley.

GOODBYE TO A RIVER – FOR NOW

You probably already know that our County Commissioners voted to shorten Delmar Ranch Road, which effectively closed public access to a long stretch of the North Bosque River. I have heard a report that one of the landowners has already put up a fence.

I have not fully researched all of the legal issues, but it appears that the portion of the road that was shortened away is still a public easement to the river. But, with



antagonistic landowners in the area and without the support of the commissioners, a lawsuit will be necessary to re-open the access.

The officers and members of this club who have advocated the preservation of the Delmar Ranch Road access have been careful to do so as individuals because we believe our club should remain a group of fly fishers.

In fact I will begin taking the steps necessary to form a new organization with the goal of filing the lawsuit to have the public easement judicially defined and opened by Court Order. If you are interested in helping please contact me – I can use all the help I can get.

Bob Hanley

TRIP REPORT – TROUTFEST WITH A LITTLE FISHING THROWN IN

Lefty Krah is an amazing guy. During his casting demonstration at Troutfest he made the point that he is 88 years old and doesn't have any strength left, but doesn't need much strength to cast well. He then proved it by effortlessly throwing more line than I can cast on a good day. What struck me the most was Lefty's enthusiasm. He went well past his one hour time slot. I think he was just having too much fun to stop.

I will confess that I cast a fly line for the purpose of fishing. I have spent very little time casting to grass burrs for practice. That's not to say it is not particularly satisfying to cast a fly way out there because you have to in order to catch fish. But the fact of the matter is we catch most of our fish at moderate distances with a cast well within our comfort zone.

Years ago I went to that fly fishing show up in Arlington. There were two memorable experiences for me. First, I bought a TFO seven weight rod and reel from President Rick Pope for the fly show price of \$100. The second was deciding to improve my casting by applying just two pointers I learned from Chico Fernandez's casting demonstration. Not only did that attempt fail, it took me months to get back to comfortable with a fly rod. I guess I tried too hard, or maybe not hard enough. Either way I am going to leave my cast as is. It may not be pretty, but I manage to catch a few fish. If I can't get to a particularly difficult fish then maybe that fish deserves to be left alone.

Lefty made a similar point, starting his presentation by saying we are all different and will all cast a little differently. With his focus on casting, Lefty probably believes practice and coaching can help, but one of the differences between all of us is how coachable we are, which may relate to how long we have been doing it. You know that old dog - new tricks thing. Even so, I thoroughly enjoyed Lefty even if not quite as much as the more technical casting guys.

I left Lefty still casting for the crowd to attend the Guides of the Guadalupe talk, which included Chris from Living Waters. Lots of tips on catching those finicky Guadalupe Rainbows which you missed if you weren't there. There were two points of more general application that I will share. First clean and dress your fly line. A clean, dressed floating line will not have that sinking tip that impairs hook sets on floating or dead drifted flies.

Also, and as I was beginning to suspect, spinning flies, like woolly buggers just might be related to light tippets.

Which gets me to fishing with those lighter tippets. The fishing was slow. I had to struggle some not to be overly disappointed, not to be one of those “fisherman who’ve just returned from some beautiful and faraway place [and] say it was pretty much a ‘waste of time’ because the body count wasn’t high enough.” (John Gierach, *At the Grave of the Unknown Fisherman*). I like the Guad and enjoyed being there. It is a unique trout stream in addition to being home to Troutfest. But my “body count” was pretty low.

Thursday morning I arrived at the Guad and set up my camp right on the river at Up the River Campgrounds. I caught my first fish right away very close to my tent. It was strange, a quick catch should have been a good sign, but somehow I had a premonition that it was going to be the only fish. Odd, that is not at all like me. Unfortunately that feeling proved all too accurate. At least it was not the only fish of the trip although I did not even have a strike until near sunset the next day. I had given up on drifting nymphs and was fishing a woolly bugger. At the moment when a guide asked me if I was having any luck I got a hard strike that even tore up the water. Of course I missed the hook-set. Is it me or do fish strike with much greater frequency when you are distracted?

Anyway, Saturday morning I fished near camp. I had a new 4 wt. sink tip which I plan to use on White Bass, but decided to give it a try with early morning woolly buggers. I had fitted that line with my standard trout leader, 7.5 foot tapering down to 5x, don’t ask me why. Obviously no thought was involved and of course I broke off at the first strike of the morning. I nipped that thing up to about 4x, tied a 4x fluorocarbon tippet and proceeded to miss two strikes and then break off again. By the time I upgraded to 3x the bite was over. Still the action had been fairly quick. Even though I didn’t hang on to anything it was as least as fun as fishing for over twenty-four hours over the preceding two days before getting bit.

After attending Troutfest I returned to the river with my 5 wt. and caught two, one drifting a pheasant tail with an occasional agitation as recommended by the Guad guides and one on a woolly bugger tied to 3x.



Early to the next morning I put that 4 wt. back into action still upgraded to 3x. I only had one definite strike, but I got the hook into the fish and hung on for the best fight of the trip. I still believe Trout fight harder after attacking a stripped woolly bugger. Also, I loaded that line onto an old reel that doesn't have much of a drag. I already had the reel and as hard as they fight, you don't need a drag on White Bass. Anyway, it was fun having to palm the reel on that Rainbow. Not long after that I decided to break camp and head for home. It was a good fish to end the trip.

Bob Hanley

FLY FISH TEXAS - MARCH 9, 2013 - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Anglers from novice to expert will gather at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center near Athens, Texas to celebrate the sport of fly-fishing. Learn the basics of fly-tying and casting, then fish for rainbow trout in the on-site ponds and streams. Attend seminars and demonstrations led by fly-fishing professionals. Visit with vendors of fly-fishing services and equipment.



Fly-fishing clubs from across Texas will be on hand to help anyone who wants to learn or improve existing skills. Equipment will be provided for casting classes, but participants are welcome to bring their own gear.

GET OUTDOORS! SPORTS SHOW AND SAFETY FAIR – MARCH 23/24 2013

The Lake Waco Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is sponsoring the *Get Outdoors! Sports Show and Safety Fair* at Twin Bridges Park Saturday, March 23, 2013 from 10am until 6pm and Sunday, March 24, 2013 from 10am until 4pm. This show will have everything from kayak demos to falconry kid's activities. Our Club has been given an opportunity to participate which should be a great way to promote fly fishing in general and what we do in particular.

CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2013

- President & FFF Liaison - John Maddux 666-9009
- Vice President & Newsletter Bob Hanley 776-5444, www.nevilleandhanley@yahoo.com
- Treasurer/Membership David Beyer
- Education Chairman - Bill "Coach" Menefee 772-1785
- Webmaster - Dale Connally 710-4004
- At Large Billy Whitehead