



NEWSLETTER
OCTOBER 2016 Volume XXI: No. 10
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NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, October 11, 2016

LOCATION:

Lake Waco Wetlands

PROGRAM:

Fly Tying and Tall Tales - About 6:00 p.m.
The Devil's River- About 7:00 p.m.

OCTOBER PROGRAM - GUIDE MARCUS RODRIGUEZ - THE DEVIL'S RIVER

The Devil's River is a place most of us have wanted to fish, but the stories about aggressive and unfriendly private landowners necessitating a long overnight float may have scared you off. To avoid confrontation with landowners floating the Devil's included the joys of sleeping on rocks in the river channel and, well, you know what in bag.

Times have changed, or, at least there is now another option. Marcus Rodriguez has recently put together Devil's River trips that allow you to fish all day and then enjoy the comforts of a lodge for the evening. Marcus has presented programs for us in the past and is always entertaining. The Devil's River is remote and pristine so you can bet that the slide show alone is worth the trip to the wetlands for our October meeting.

ALSO IN OCTOBER - QUAIL FOREVER ANNUAL BANQUET

The Heart O' Texas Chapter of Quail Forever will hold its annual banquet on Thursday, October 27, 2016 at George's Banquet Room located at 1925 Speight Avenue beginning at 6:00 pm. Our Webmaster, Loren Decker, is President of the Heart O' Texas Chapter of Quail Forever and will have some banquet tickets at our October meeting.

FLY TYING NIGHT - LET'S DO IT AGAIN - THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2016

Our September fly tying night went very well. Pat Vanek demonstrated tying Mike Shultz's Swingin' D. This pattern has so many moving parts that big Bass will not be able to do anything but hammer it.

Other tyers just tied what they needed to fill those gaps in their fly boxes. Several club members showed up to observe and participate in some high quality BS. A few flies were gifted, a good deal for the recipients.



This is a simple baitfish pattern tied with a bunny zonker strip.

Stay tuned to notices this month because there may be some changes to tying night, including location. The conference room was at capacity and we might change to a larger room.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM - LATHAM SPRINGS

Thinking about it, I may have been spoiled by those times at Latham Springs when you had action on nearly every cast. On our September outing at Latham Springs the fishing was good, but we did have to work for them - a little. Many fish were caught.

Dee Whitehead brought in this nice Bass on a small fly, about a size 18 black ant pattern. Dee was using a one half weight TFO rod which made it look like he had hooked the Loch Ness monster.



I was also fishing small, targeting Perch, but picking up a few Bass. As the day faded I switched to a Small Llano Bug, a top water pattern. On the first cast, as soon as the fly hit the water, a small Bass jumped almost completely out of the water and took the fly on re-entry, something I had only seen bull frogs do before. I didn't take a picture of that Bass, but it was pretty much the twin of this one I had caught earlier on the small no-name Perch fly still hooked in its mouth.



Like I said, the fishing was good, but sitting around the picnic area as the sun set was a close second. When fish are caught the fishing is always the best part of an outing, but there is nothing wrong with sitting around trading tales. We covered topics ranging from the investigation of the Baylor football scandal (or lack of an investigation) to the demise of the local quail population and its hopeful recovery with the help of Quail Forever. Thanks to Pat Vanek all of this was

fueled by hot dogs and links, something we haven't done in several years. It was Pat's idea to have a cook out after fishing and he made it happen. Mike Lucas surprised us with his Alabama hot dog sauce which made the dogs even better.

WACO FLY FISHING 102 - OUR FOURTH 102 CLASS

We had decent weather conditions for our fourth Waco Fly Fishing 102 class. The fish were cooperative, but we had to work a little for them. Even so, everybody caught a few including some that had some size.



Every time we hold one of these classes it strengthens my belief that the best way to get started in fly fishing is to fly fish with a little help from somebody that knows the basics. It's very rewarding to be one of those helpers and you even get to catch a fish or two. Considering that demonstration, like a picture, is worth a thousand words, I was showing how to strip the line in and caught a Perch. That gave me the opportunity to demonstrate hook setting, fish landing, the wetting of hands, hook removal and release of the fish, all of which I was more than happy to do.

A special thanks to Fly Fishing Professors Billy Whitehead and Calvin Walter. Also thanks to Teaching Assistant Jim Moore, holding one of those feisty little Latham Springs Bass, who also arranged for some cool

aerial views of the class in progress at the "let's go fly fishing" stage. Jim is probably ready to be hooded to full professor status.



We will hold another 102 class next Spring and I encourage to come out and help. You don't have to be a tenured fly fishing professor to help. We are just teaching the basics.

It can be rewarding. This is Ian who took our class with his mother. Ian did well.



SOME HAVE "LAID ASIDE BUSINESS AND GONE A'FISHING"

Nueces River

The water in the Middle Bosque can be very clear, but the water in the Nueces is virtually invisible. It is so clear that it is tricky trying to figure out how deep the water actually is. What looks to be a foot or so deep to the uninitiated turns out to be waist deep.

James Jeffrey and I made the long drive to Big Oak Camp near the town of Camp Wood to sample the fishing after reading up on things in *Southwest Fly Fishing* magazine and then studying Kevin Hutchinson's book, *Fly-Fishing the Texas Hill Country*. There is a nice remote feel to this part of Texas. Another nice touch is very limited cell phone coverage.



New fishing buddy in crystal clear Nueces River water

It was late afternoon when we arrived at our cabin and later still when we had all of our essential gear (a full pick-up load) safely stowed. With limited day light left we just fished downstream from camp catching a few small Guadalupe Bass and Perch. It was actually a bit disappointing because there didn't seem to be very much holding water and except for that one that threw the hook the fish were pretty small.

On the morning of our first full day we tried the public access at CR 416 and fished downstream from there through water that was described in Kevin's book as wadable with lots of fish. Well it was wadable. Before leaving for lunch we decided to check out the upstream side of the crossing and found deeper water actually holding some nice fish including at least one big Bass. Of course I didn't catch the big one, but in less than an hour I easily doubled my fish count for the trip so far. One Perch was probably the most colorful Perch I have ever caught, actually more colorful than my camera could handle, but this photograph will give an idea.



The afternoon plan was to return to CR 416, but we found it had turned into a swimming hole. We scouted some and returned to camp to try our luck up stream. We learned that there is no reason to fish from camp.

The next morning, after driving by a small mixed herd of Whitetails and Axis deer we returned to what was no longer a swimming hole at CR 416 and did well including my best Bass of the trip, a little largemouth. Far from a trophy but a feisty little thing.

The only downer was getting profiled or maybe better described as reverse profiled as we were getting ready to move to another access. I saw James walking back to the truck and decided to make a few casts before joining him. I abandoned that plan when I saw a game warden's truck drive over the crossing. Instead, I reeled up and headed for the truck to save the warden the

trouble of having to come to me to check my license. After all we were leaving soon any way. I couldn't see the parking area until I was nearly back at the crossing and was surprised that the warden wasn't there. James said he waved but did not even stop. I guess two old fly fishermen working out of a pickup festooned with CCA stickers were not worth checking.



We finished the morning at CR 410 and caught fish upstream and downstream. I went upstream and found fish at the prettiest place I found on the river, about a half mile from the crossing. I think one of the Perch I caught there was even more brilliantly colored than the one at CR 416, but no photo. I just couldn't seem to get my act together and the little guy needed to get back in the water. James reported a good catch rate downstream and we rated CR 410 as worth fishing again. But, this trip was somewhat of a recon mission so before breaking for lunch we scouted CR 408, Camp Wood and access near the town.

That evening, our last at the Nueces, we fished right at the CR 408 crossing where we could see big Bass, Perch and Rio Grande Cichlids. We caught several of the smaller fish and I managed to land the biggest Perch I have caught in quite a while. The only disappointment was seeing some large Rios slowly swim away from the commotion of our casting. I have not caught many Rios ever, none on this trip, and those Rios at CR 408 were huge, easily the biggest I have ever seen.

The Nueces runs clear and clean through a part of Texas I had never visited before - beautiful country, remote, picturesque and populated more by wildlife than people. It can be described as the middle of nowhere and I like the middle of nowhere. A new favorite place for my list.

The fishing was not easy, we had to cover literally miles of fishless water. When we found fish they tended to be smallish, averaging about the size of the fish upstream from the 3047 Crossing

on the Middle Bosque. Of course, there's nothing wrong with that, the 3047 Crossing is also one of my favorite places. We plan to go back and will do better now that we know a few places not to fish.

CLUB BUSINESS

We have a very cool logo for our club. When you pay your dues you can have one logo sticker free of charge. If you didn't get your free one, let me (Bob Hanley) know and the oversight will be corrected. Or, you can wait for our next batch to arrive. The current stickers are a little over six inches long, a good size to display on your vehicle. We have recently ordered a smaller version, a little under four inches, a good size for fly boxes, etc.

Extra stickers are available for purchase at \$2.50 for the large size which is only pennies over our cost. The smaller version should be a little cheaper. We'll know when they arrive with the bill.

I believe there are many people in the area who have an interest in fly fishing but do not know we exist. The idea is to get our logo out in public to promote our club.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

"An ethical angler does more than what is required and less than what is allowed."

Alberta fishing regulation publication quoted by John Gierach in *Fool's Paradise*

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