



NEWSLETTER
March 2017 Volume XXII: No. 3

www.wacoflyfishingclub.org

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

LOCATION:

Lake Waco Wetlands

PROGRAM:

Fly Tying and Tall Tales

About 6:00 p.m.

Fly Fishing for Exotics in South Florida

Texas Council President Jim Gray

About 7:00 p.m.

MARCH PROGRAM - FLY FISHING FOR EXOTICS IN SOUTH FLORIDA
TEXAS COUNCIL PRESIDENT - JIM GRAY

That's a Texas Carp, not a Florida exotic, but the point is that Jim can catch fish. Jim always provides entertaining and informative programs which will help you catch fish. This time you are likely to find yourself longing for a trip to Florida.

As most of you already know, Jim took over this year as the President of the Texas Council of the International Federation of Fly Fishers. The Texas Council is only a few years old and has already made great strides in advancing fly fishing in Texas. After only weeks on the job Jim has already implemented some fresh ideas to make the Texas Council even better. As part of his program, Jim will bring us up to date on the Texas Council.



FEBRUARY PROGRAM - PAT VANEK

We should have a strong White Bass run this year. Local rivers have been flowing for months so water conditions are good. With the warm weather the run should be early this year. Johnny Elkins was at the meeting and reported catches already on the Middle Bosque. Jim Moore seconded that observation. By the time you receive this newsletter the run should be well underway - get out there.

Pat covered everything you need to know to catch White Bass, way too much information for this newsletter. But, a few basics -

You will catch more Whites with a sink tip or sinking line because Whites tend to stay deep. A line that sinks helps you keep your fly deeper for longer. Pat prefers to use a relatively light fly with his sinking line which necessitates a short leader, thirty inches or so. This keeps the light fly near the depth of the line so the light fly flutters around where the fish are. If you don't have some type of sinking line you can still fish with a floating line, but use a heavier fly and longer leader, up to nine feet. Your fly won't stay as deep and the heavier fly won't have as much action as a lighter fly, but you will still catch fish.

An aggressive retrieve, short fast strips with an occasional pause is usually the best way to trigger a strike. If that doesn't work, keep trying something different until you figure out what the fish are looking for.

At the peak of the run, be prepared for a crowd, but the crowd thins after a few weeks. By April most anglers have finished with White Bass even though there are still Whites to be caught.

FLY TYING NIGHT - THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2017

Back in February, I decided to fish instead of tie at tying night. That didn't mean I couldn't get Dan's BBQ and join the tyers for a pleasant evening of fly fish talk seasoned with a riveting story of how John and Andrea Maddux were in a boat that got flipped by the strongest tide on the planet at the Bay of Fundy. Not exactly fly fishing, but the tale involved a boat and lots of water.

Remember, fly tying night is now at Uncle Dan's BBQ so you can tie on a full stomach. The tying crowd continues to grow, but there is plenty of room and plenty of BBQ. We'll get started about 5:30 pm on Thursday, March 23, 2017.

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

GUADALUPE RIVER AND TROUTFEST

Pat Vanek was asked to demonstrate fly tying under the big tent at Troutfest so he went. I like going to Troutfest so I went too. Many, many others also attended. I'll be surprised if it wasn't a record crowd.

Troutfest is one of those events that allows you to immerse yourself in fly fishing for Trout without having to leave Texas. There are fly shop booths, outfitter booths, tying demonstrations, casting, presentations on Trout fishing related topics, a great breakfast croissant served by the Lazy L&L grill and more. The more includes the opportunity to actually fish for Trout.

I was a little worried about flows. Canyon Lake was filling and was already above conservation pool due to heavy rains upstream. Releases from the dam were going to increase, it was just a matter of when. I decided to go anyway. I enjoy Troutfest enough to have a good weekend even if the Guad got too heavy to fish.

When I checked early Saturday morning the flow was right at 400 CFS, heavy but doable in the right places. I decided to fish out of Rio Raft where I could safely wade downstream. A few years ago I had done real well along this part of the river casting a woolly bugger. Since then a few very heavy flows seemed to have moved enough gravel into this area to fill in the deeper holding runs, but at 400 CFS I thought the fish might be back.

I was right - kind of. There were two spin fishermen across the river and soon after I started casting one of them caught a little Trout, probably a TPWD stocker. That was encouraging because at least some fish were in the area and they were willing to chase down a meal. After many casts none of us had any more action. I was thinking of making a change when the other spinner hooked a small fish and lost it. It appeared that fishing was slow, but I'd give it another few hundred casts.

After a few light strikes, like fish biting the tail of my fly, maybe, I had not hooked a fish and started thinking about a change again. Suddenly, I had a heavy, bona fide strike, set the hook and was into a Trout. The fish wasn't big, but clearly bigger than a state stocker. After a decent fight I netted the fish and realized it was my first of 2017. That merited a photograph. Plus he was a handsome guy.



Of course after actually catching a fish I flailed away for awhile, but nothing else happened. I had been at it long enough to need a break so I made a slow move to a GRTU lease, the one that provides access to Barking Dog Pool.

When I got down to the river I found it packed. Overall, the river was more crowded than I had ever seen it. All the usual spots were taken so I decided to drift some nymphs through some fast water that is normally too skinny and fast to hold fish, but might work at 400 CFS. After working along for about ten yards my strike indicator did something and I set the hook on a big fish. I could feel weight and his charge upstream looked like one of those videos of a submarine breaching the surface. Unfortunately my hook set had been poor and the hook slipped out. The angle had not been the best for setting the hook and, truth be told, fishing had been slow enough that I wasn't exactly concentrating which really explains that poor hook set.

I was concentrating a few minutes later when I got another strike, expertly set the hook and landed the next fish, a cute little state fish. I was tired, my legs hurt and I was hungry. With no action for the next half hour it was time for lunch and check in at Lazy L&L.

Check in was a little more challenging than I anticipated, but I did get a refresher on what a "reservation" is. After diligently checking his computer for my name and the campsite number the L&L guy found nothing. He then explained that a reservation is when you telephone ahead of time and ask them to hold a campsite for the days you are planning to visit. Enlightened I told the guy that's what I thought I had done two or three weeks earlier. When he checked again, nothing miraculously appeared on the computer and this time he turned the screen so I could see he was telling the truth. Hoping my favorite campsite was still available I asked if I could have No. 40. Well reservations be damned, it turns out campsites are available on a first come first served basis and the L&L guy couldn't say if No. 40 was still available. Wait, what about the reservation thing? Going with Plan B, I was permitted to drive in and see if No. 40 was open.

My heart sank when I discovered a tent at No. 40, but then I saw that the tent looked brand new. Pat and I were sharing the campsite. Back when I thought I had made one of those reservation things Pat mentioned he needed a new tent. Hopeful, I made my way to Troutfest, found Pat and learned that was his new tent. We had No. 40 after all. Pat had gone through the same process earlier in the day and persevered to get our camp site. Pat must look smarter than me because he was spared the lecture on reservations.

Sunday we planned to get an early start. You can arrive at GRTU sites thirty minutes before sunrise. When we were ready to leave camp, we still had a little time to kill and there is no better time killing activity than staring at the water. No. 40 sits on the bluff above the Devil's Playground offering a great view of the rapids below. We knew from the night before that the rapids were really ripping. I noticed a light at the head of the rapids. Pat observed that the light appeared to be on a canoe. At that point the light started down the rapids. By the time I thought about preparing to call search and rescue the canoe made it through the rapids. Lucky guy, but using up your luck on shooting rapids in the dark leaves you very left to use on catching fish.

Maybe you can tell by now that the fishing wasn't the best. Even Pat had caught only one Saturday morning. We fished a little Saturday night and again Sunday morning with nothing

caught. I think I had one strike drifting nymphs, but we decided that not catching fish casting streamers is less boring than not catching fish while staring at strike indicators. I was there when Pat had two strikes on some big flashy streamer, but neither of us caught anything. We have an excuse, flows had been increased to almost 600 CFS.

Although I had planned to stay at least a second night I threw in the towel. Pat hung in there a little longer but made it back before I had finished breaking camp. Actually, he fished another hour or so because I had breakfast and made one last stroll through Troutfest before returning to camp. He reported one more strike, but nothing hooked.

By no means a wasted trip. Because I did a lot of streamer fishing I got to enjoy my surroundings like the Wood Duck pair flitting around their nest box, a big hawk that I initially thought might be an eagle, several Ospreys, a big Gobbler and the vegetation flowering and greening up. I'd get all poetic about it, but I don't have that particular ability.

Of course there was Troutfest and a chance to visit with the Living Waters guys, Chris and Marcus. Matt Bennett was there tying flies, Dakus Geslen gave a presentation on water bugs, Jim Grey was at the Texas Council booth, Kira Quam was working the crowd and I got to meet Troy --- who shares my interest in making leather accessories like fly reel cases.

Bob Hanley

GUADALUPE RIVER - ONE WEEK LATER

One of our newer members, Kenley Crowe made his way to the Guad the weekend after Troutfest. Actually, Kenley and his group got started on Thursday and braved high flows, 1,100 CFS, until Saturday when flows were dropped to 400 CFS. That is still on the high side, but beats you up a lot less. Unfortunately, high flows followed by a rapid drop in flow puts the fish into a foul mood and no fish were caught, until Sunday that is.

On Sunday flows were dropped to 200 CFS which is just about perfect. The fish got happy, started to feed and the picture speaks for itself. The happy fish were feeding below the weir downstream from Rio Raft.



LAKE GRANBURY

Ted Dickie called to report good fishing for Whites and at least one small Striper below the Lake Granbury dam. If you want to give it a try, Ted will tell you what you need to know to get to the holding water. Give him a call at 817-964-3367.

Ted also has an invitation to all members:

"I have purchased a R-Pod camper. This summer, about June and July, I plan to set up camp at South Fork for about 4 to 6 weeks. I believe this area offers the most and best fly fishing in Colorado. With my kickboat I have floated about 14 miles of the Rio Grande. This year I will continue to do more of the same. I have several stretches I have not floated. It is an unique experience and a bucket list item. Also I plan to redo a trip I wrote about several years ago. Below Rio Grande Reservoir is a seven mile box canyon. It is an incredible experience. Not for the faint of heart and not alone for sure..

Within a short drive, I think one could fish different water each day. If anyone would be interested in going up, let me know. We would be very flexible in time or area. Stop off for a day or two or more. Mail me at tedmac65@att.net"

Ted Dickie

MIDDLE BOSQUE



It should come as no surprise that White Bass have been running on the Middle Bosque and that many, many anglers are running after them. This one, caught on our February tying night, is above average in size in for the Middle.

A year or two ago I learned that the residents along McLennan Crossing Road had made some effort to close the road to the public due to the stupidity of a few of those racing to the Barrett Road access. I know I'm preaching to the choir here, but if you are chatting with a fellow angler see if you can casually bring up access issues like picking up trash and not driving like a maniac down the residential streets leading to public access. If we lose the Barrett Road access chasing White Bass in the Spring will require a long power boat ride or a parachute.

What got me thinking about this was a recent news story about residents of a busy street putting up signs that said, "Please drive like your kids lived on this street." Not a bad way of putting it and something to keep in mind.

Bob Hanley

WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE

A new event is the Texas Fly Fishing & Brew Festival scheduled for the Plano Centre on March 11-12, 2017. The Festival is sponsored by TFO and offering well known speakers like Bob Clouser, Lefty Kreh and Frank Smethurst to name only a few. www.txflyfishingfestival.org.

A not so new event is also event is also happening on March 11, 2017 in Fort Worth - TRWD Flyfest. This will be the second year for the event. Activities include classes, demonstrations, a big Trout fishing contest, beer (there seems to be a pattern developing in fly festivals) and more. For information - trwdflyfest.com.

DUES ARE DUE - INCENTIVES TO PAY AND RECRUIT

The dues incentive drawing will be held at our March meeting. All paid members as of the March meeting will have one chance in a prize drawing. If you recruit new members, you will receive another chance in the raffle for each recruit who is paid up by the time of the drawing. A new member is anyone who was not a paid member in 2016. It is the responsibility of the recruiter to confirm his or her new members with our Treasurer, John Maddux.

The lead prize is a seven foot, four piece, three weight fly rod, case and reel selected by Billy Whitehead. Other prizes include a club logo fly box, a blue club cap, a kaki club cap, flies and more. You will automatically be in the drawing if your dues are received at or before the March meeting. By the way, tyers are invited to sweeten the fly box with one or two of their favorite Whit Bass patterns.

OFFICERS FOR 2017

President & Newsletter
Vice President
Treasurer & IFFF Liaison
Webmasters
Social Media
At Large

Bob Hanley 776-5444, nevilleandhanley@yahoo.com
Pat Vanek
John Maddux 666-9009
Loren Decker, Dale Connally
Kris Kahler
Billy Whitehead, Robert Cervenka



*Waco Fly Fishing Club
2017 Membership Application*

Dues: Individual \$ 24.00
 Family \$ 36.00
 Student \$ 16.00

Date: _____

Name(s): _____

Address (Street or P.O. Box and City/Zip Code):

Telephone: Home _____

Cell _____

Work _____

E-mail address: _____

How do you prefer your club newsletter to be delivered? Mail Email Mail and Email

THE WACO FLY FISHING CLUB HAS MY PERMISSION TO SHARE MY CONTACT INFORMATION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FLY FISHERS.

Signature

Payments and this form can be turned in at regular club meetings or by mail to:

Bob Hanley
P.O. Box 8030
Waco, Texas 76714