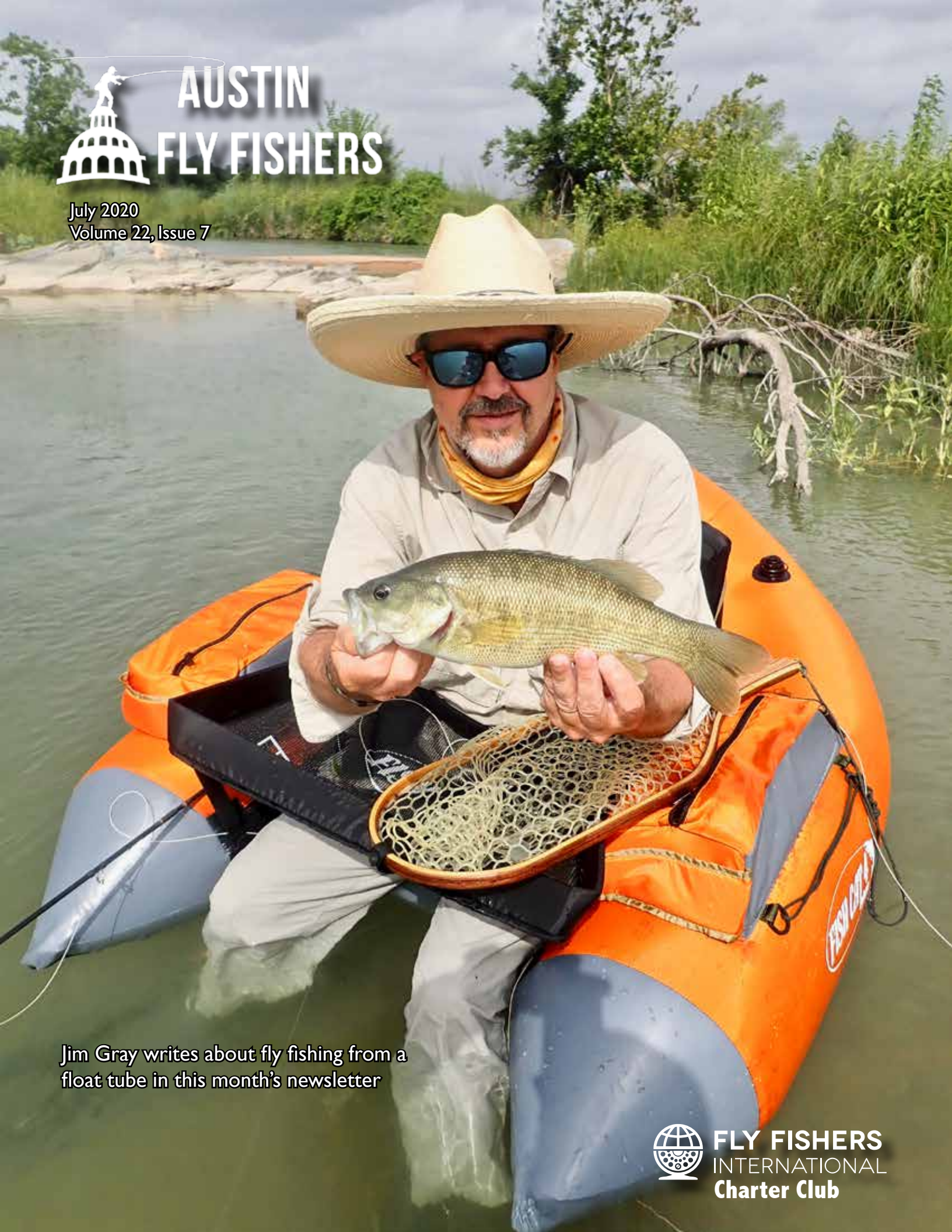




AUSTIN FLY FISHERS

July 2020
Volume 22, Issue 7



Jim Gray writes about fly fishing from a float tube in this month's newsletter



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President's Message by David Bush

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Last month marked our first online monthly meeting due to the pandemic so hopefully you saw the meeting on our Facebook pages whether you watched live or viewed the recording later. Thanks to Aaron Reed for being our guinea pig speaker and doing a great job telling us about the Lampasas River. If you haven't picked up his new book, Fly Fishing Austin & Central Texas, be sure to do so. I bought a copy from Living Waters Fly Shop, and I have to say I am very impressed with Aaron's work. The quality of the writing, illustrations, and photographs is right up there with the best fishing books I own. Way to go, Aaron!

This month we will once again be holding our monthly meeting live on Facebook. To participate, all you need to do is go to our Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/atx-flyfishers/ at 7:00 pm on Thursday, July 15, to participate live. Alternatively, if you are a member of the Austin Fly Fishers Facebook Private Group, you can go to www.facebook.com/groups/22082405715/ at the same time. The video of the meeting including our featured speaker will be available on our Facebook pages to view at a later time if you can't make the 7:00 start time. However, by participating live, you will be able to ask questions of the speakers using the Facebook comment feature. We will be going live around 6:45, so feel free to drop in a little early to make sure you're all set up to join in.

If you are not a member of our rapidly expanding Facebook Private Group, be sure to join by going to www.facebook.com/groups/22082405715/ and requesting access. We are also working to increase our Instagram visibility so if you're an IG user, you can follow the club at www.instagram.com/austinflyfishers/.

Each year, Texas fly fishers look forward to Oktoberfest, the premiere annual fly fishing event in the state. For 2020's gathering the Fredericksburg Fly Fishing Club has made a big change from prior years. Instead of meeting along the South Llano River near Junction, they've moved the venue to the

new Edgewater Springs Resort along the banks of the Pedernales River near Fredericksburg from October 16-18. The resort offers more than one mile of private access to the river, so that location, along with all the planned events and vendors, should make for a fun-filled weekend. The new location offers many more lodging choices from tent camping all the way up to top notch bed and breakfasts for which Fredericksburg is well-known. In addition, there are shopping options and wineries to keep everyone in the family entertained for the weekend. If you plan to attend, you are encouraged to make your lodging reservations as soon as possible since fall is traditionally a popular time to visit the area. You can learn more about Oktoberfest at www.fredericksburg-flyfishers.com/oktoberfest.

If you're like me, dealing with Covid-19 is getting old. In particular, I miss socializing with friends and family and getting out in the world as much as I did before the pandemic. Unfortunately, the most recent data for Texas indicates the virus is gaining momentum which could lead to a retightening of restrictions to avoid overwhelming medical resources. At the same time, we've all read about or seen people choosing not to take the recommended precautions, perhaps because they're not convinced these actions will help slow the spread of the disease. It doesn't help that there has been contradictory information in the media which could lead some to be skeptical. As annoying as it is to social distance, wear a mask, and wash my hands more frequently than usual, I'm going to assume the medical experts are right and do all I can to keep myself and the people around me safe and healthy. If it turns out the data is off, the experts are wrong, and doing these annoying things don't help, I figure no harm done. I hope y'all agree and encourage others to do their part to keep our fellow Texans healthy.

Until next month, be safe...

Dave

July Speaker – Matt Bennett by Scott Kerrigan

Online Event with Matt Bennett Tying his Lunch Money Fly

Thursday July 16 7:00 pm

www.facebook.com/atxflyfishers/

As Dave mentioned in his President's Message go to our Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/atxflyfishers/ at 7:00 pm on Thursday, July 15, to access Matt Bennett's presentation. Alternatively, if you are a member of the Austin Fly Fishers Facebook Private Group, you can go to www.facebook.com/groups/22082405715/ at the same time.

Matt Bennett is a full-time commercial fly tyer and the owner of Fly Geek Custom Flies. Matt is a member of the Umpqua Feather Merchants Signature Fly Designer program, and was awarded the 2015 Charles E. Brooks Memorial Award by the International Federation of Fly Fishers. You can often find him behind the vise at many fly fishing events and shows throughout Texas and beyond.

The Lunch Money was created out of need for a bite-sized baitfish streamer for the Texas Hill Country. Most of our baitfish are in the 2-3" range and due to our normally ultra-clear water, our bass can be fairly finicky, which meant it needed to both look realistic and have the right amount of movement to The original iteration was named the "Llano Critter" after the Llano River west of here, where it produced very well.



Financial Report

by Jim Robinson

6/1/2020 to 6/30/2020

Begin Bal. Checking	\$18,299.24
Income:	
Total Income	\$00.00
Disbursements:	
FFI Insurance	
<u>\$325.00</u>	
Total Disbursements	\$325.00
Net	
(\$325.00)	
Unencumbered:	\$10,202.89
Encumbered Funds:	
Casting for Recovery	\$2,365.52
SKIFF	\$5,505.83
Ending Bal-Checking	\$18,074.24

Float Tube Fly Fishing the Hill Country by Jim Gray

I've been fishing the Llano most weekends since early spring, catching plenty of small fish, but very few quality fish. I knew the bigger fish must be hiding somewhere, but I've struggled to find them. On a recent trip, I saw a long stretch of deeper water with an undercut bank. There were trees, vines, bushes and long grasses growing over the water, providing shade. Unfortunately, this inviting water was too deep to wade and required a long cast from the opposite bank. I gave up after losing several flies trying to get right up against the bank. I thought about trying again with my kayak, but there wasn't enough water to justify bringing the kayak out. That's when I remembered that I have a float tube that I haven't used in years.

I was back the next week with my tube and I wasn't disappointed. By skip-casting flies under the overhanging brush, I caught more than dozen bass that were better than 12 inches, including several fish that were 15 inches. My go to fly has been a large llanolope popper, tied on size 2 and 4 Gamakatsu B10S hooks. Since that first successful outing, I've fished the Llano every weekend, looking for similar water –deep with cut banks and lots of cover; and I've been catching some really nice Gaudalupe and largemouth bass.



A float tube gives you greater access to the deeper sections along the river bank

I never gave much thought to using a float tube on our rivers; but it really does fill a niche between wading and fishing from a kayak. Float tubes are the most affordable option for getting on the water. You can pick up a tube for less than \$100 and get a decent pair of flippers for \$20. I spent \$320 for my Outcast Fish Cat 4 Deluxe and I think it's worth every penny. I also like how easy it is to transport them. I'm able to pack everything into a medium sized duffel bag that fits in the trunk of my car. It takes me 15 min to unpack everything from the trunk, inflate the tube, rig my rod and get on the water.



Guads seem to like the Llanolope Popper



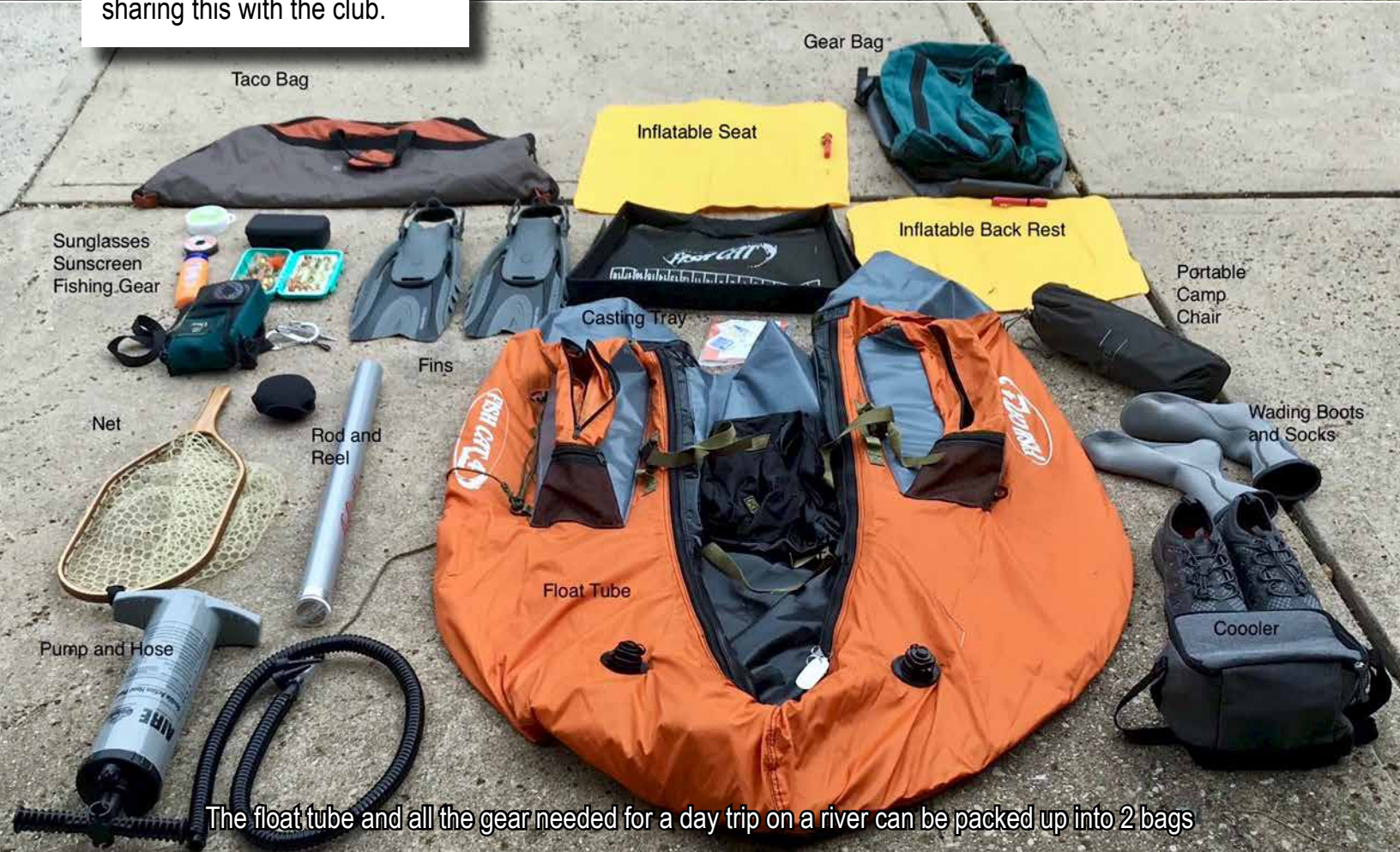
Another nice Guad

I think my favorite thing about fishing from a tube is how easy it is to position myself to fish. When I'm in a kayak on the river, I think I only fish about 1/3 of the time. I spend the rest trying to position the boat and manage the fly line. I'm constantly having to put my fly rod down and pick up the paddle. When I'm in my tube, a quick kick of my flippers and I'm ready to cast. My catch rates are way up.

There are trade offs with a float tube. You can't travel as far and you can't carry as much; but it's so easy to transport and fish from, it has its place. I've put together a presentation on using a float tube to fish local waters. Once we are able to start our club meetings again, I'll be sharing this with the club.



Preparing for launch



The float tube and all the gear needed for a day trip on a river can be packed up into 2 bags

SKIFF Program by Bob Maindelle

Dear SKIFF Friends,

On Thursday, June 18th, I conducted the season's 7th Soldiers' Kids Involved in Fishing Fun (SKIFF) program trip with the 14-year-old Matthew Merchant aboard.

Matthew's dad, US Army Captain Courtney Merchant, is currently separated from his family attending a course qualifying him to become a hospital chaplain. Matthew's mom, a Kindergarten teacher at a local Christian school, dropped him off and picked him up while enjoying some mother-daughter time with Matthew's sister, Allison, while Matthew was on the water with me.

Just as the last hour (which is typically the hottest and brightest) of a morning trip is often the least productive, so the first hour (also typically the hottest and brightest) of an evening trip is often the least productive.

Knowing this, we focused on fishing for catfish prior to turning our sights on white bass. Using my "Catfish Plumbs" on spinning rods rigged with braided line, we presented doughbait, cut shad, and prepared cutbaits to catfish which were suspended at 18-22 feet over a deeper bottom which we located using sonar while searching a wind-impacted, steep bank.

We managed 9 catfish including 8 blues and a channel before moving on to fish for white bass, beginning around 6:45 PM.

We found scattered, suspended white bass in an area roughly 300 yards in diameter and worked these over with tandem 3-armed umbrella rigs equipped with Pet Spoons using my two downriggers.

As sunset came a bit early (thanks to the sun "setting" behind a thick cloud bank in the west which completely obscured it), we began looking for larger, organized groups of white bass gathering to push shallow and feed. We found what we were after off a gentle point in 18-22



feet of water. We used the downriggers initially to verify that these were white bass and make sure they were in a feeding mood, then we Spot-Locked on them and used MAL lures with a smoking retrieve to tempt them right up until they quit at dark.

Matthew landed 35 fish in all.

There is no doubt that the uncertainty of COVID-19 has impacted our local com-

munity. The military is generally limiting non-essential travel, in fact, active duty personnel are currently restricted to a 200-mile radius from Fort Hood. Parents are generally hesitant to have their children out and about. Nonetheless, as requests come in this summer, my intent is to say "yes" to every military family with a need.

Thank you all for your support!

AFF Outings by Juan Shepperd

I want to provide an Outings update. June brought some great fishing in Central Texas. I fished the Lower Colorado river right below Longhorn Dam for the June outing and it was a perfect set up. Here's an early morning picture from the Dam looking downriver. For those that haven't fished it. It's great water. Hard to believe it is less than a mile from downtown Austin. The fish, however, didn't cooperate that day. I saw them, but couldn't land one.

Fortunately, fish on the South Llano River were much more cooperative the next couple of days. My wife and kids were not interested in camping and fishing with me in the Texas heat, and I needed to burn some vacation days. As a dad with young kids, I don't get many hall passes to fish solo. With work and my wife's consent, I headed out and fished the South Llano River near Junction from a kayak for two days. If you haven't fished this river, you should consider it. If you don't have a boat, don't worry. There are several public river crossings. Access isn't a problem. The South Llano is a beautiful Texas stream with lots of wadeable moving water over smooth, round river rocks. At times, it reminded me of a Rocky Mountain stream. The water is cool. The river bottom is consistent, and the rushing water over the rocks creates a nice rippling sound. A babbling brook, if you will. I know this is a stretch, but it was a 100 degrees and I felt cool all day. Works for me. I didn't catch any monsters but plenty of small, wild native Guadalupe bass willing to eat anything Matt Bennett ties provided lots of company. Tie your own flies? Take them. These fish aren't picky.

I don't have anything planned for July as I am out of town with the family. No one volunteered to lead an outing in July. Help is always appreciated.

Keep the Lampasas River in mind for the August outing. Dana Williams and Carol Olewin fished the Lampasas by the Old Maxdale Bridge near Killeen recently. Covered in Aaron Reed's new book too. Normally I like to fish the San Marcos in peak summer because - like the South Llano, it is spring feed and cooler - but with Covid concerns, access and space may be more important. Dana mentioned it has tons of room both upstream and downstream with lots of good fishing opportunities.

Dave Bush may lead an outing to South Padre Island in September. Traditionally, the Austin Fly Fishers take a trip down there in the Fall. I went last year and the fishing was excellent. More to come.

October looks busy. Couple of things scheduled. First, if you are looking for cooler temperature - or seek some real Rocky Mountain spring water (not my interpretation of the South Llano) - sign up for my Oct 1 - Oct 5 trip to northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. Plenty of brown, brook and rainbow trout. The Fall leaves turn at this time of year. Four nights of lodging and 3 full days of guided fishing and all meals provided. Look at your calendars and let me know if you are interested. Second, the Fredericksburg Fly Fishers have announced Oktoberfisch 2020 for Oct 16 - 18. This year they will hold the venue to the Pedernales River. Registration is open.

I've scheduled a Broken Bow trip for Nov 5 - 8, 2020. If you're not familiar with the Lower Mountain Fork River, there are some big trout caught here. The San Gabriel Fly Fishers go often and the Texas Women Fly Fishers make the trip yearly, and will be there the same weekend in early November. I fished it in the summer years ago and it's great water. Close to Texas too. There is a campground and plenty of log homes and cabins for rent. I booked one for me and my family. If interested, I can point you to some websites and help you. This won't be the regular Club outing for November. I want you to know about it and give you plenty of time should you want to make the trip.

Last, if you haven't fished this year, I encourage you to get out and enjoy the water. Be safe and responsible, and I things should be fine. Ever time I get outside, I am reminded a day on the water (even a half day!) beats sitting at home. Hope to see you soon.





Oct 1-5 New Mexico: Land of Enchantment

I have an update on this fall Rocky Mountain fly fishing trip. Several people signed up. There are a few spots left. If interested, I encourage you to sign up soon. This gives you time to clear your schedule. Sharpen your casting. Hone your skills.

For those of you that missed it, I have organized a Northern New Mexico Trout fly fishing trip for Oct 1 - Oct 5, 2020. It is a 3-day, 4-night package with lodging, meals and 3-days of guided fishing with an Orvis endorsed fly fishing guide service. This is not an official Club outing. The trip is limited to 6 people in a 4-bedroom, 2-story cabin (7 people if someone wants to bring a spouse/significant other and share a queen bed). Each bedroom has a private bathroom. The cabin has a living room/common room, fireplace and deck. It is located on the Chama River, where you'll find good populations of large wild brown and rainbow trout. Other water we can fish include the Brazos, Los Pinos and San Juan Rivers. Early October is a great time to fish this part of the country. You will need to reserve a spot on this trip with a credit card.

Forgive me, I must state the obvious. It is important to you and me and anyone interested in this trip. I understand COVID19 has disrupted a lot of fishing plans. None of us know what the future holds. At this time, this lodge and outfitter are practicing safe, state of New Mexico mandated protocols. It is critical if you are interested in this trip, and are comfortable with the situation, you practice safe social distancing. Before, during and after the trip. Exercise good judgement. If you are feeling sick, do not go. Fishing and enjoying the outdoors should be relaxing and fun and safe. While it is not an official club outing, your actions and behavior reflect on the Austin Fly Fishers and impact - literally - the health and enjoyment of your fellow outdoors enthusiasts. Please keep everyone's health and safety in mind and act responsibly. Thank you.

Here's a high level itinerary:

Day 1: Arrive at the Cabin around 4:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon. Settle in. Dinner at the cabin.

Day 2: Guided fishing at one of the locations offered. Lunch on the river. Breakfast and dinner will be served at the cabin.

Day 3: Guided fishing at one of the locations offered. Lunch on the river. Breakfast and dinner will be served at the cabin.

Day 4: Guided fishing at one of the locations offered. Lunch on the river. Breakfast and dinner will be served at the cabin.

Day 5: Breakfast will be served at the cabin. Check-out by 11:00 am.

Guides provide all the flies, tippet and leaders. If you want to bring your own rod, 4 and 5-weight rods are best. If you don't have a fly rod, your guide will have one you can use at no extra cost. If you need waders, these too can be provided to you though you will need to communicate shoe size in advance. You are responsible for your own New Mexico fishing license (and Colorado fishing license, if you want to cross the state line and fish). Guide gratuity is extra. Alcohol is BYOB.

Price of this 3-day, 4-night package fly fishing trip with lodging, meals and 3-days of guided fishing (2 people per guide) is \$1,485.00. Again, you'll need a credit card to secure a spot. The trip is more than 3 months away. I hope this gives you enough time to ask for time off at work. Clear it with the better half or family at home. Budget and save money. If driving, Austin, TX to Chama, New Mexico is roughly a 13 hour drive. You may want to consider leaving Austin early and fish some of New Mexico's other beautiful rivers and streams. Maybe stop in Santa Fe the night before and enjoy dinner and a cold beer or margarita. That's up to you. Possibly even go up earlier and get in some more fishing. Please be at the cabin by 5:00 pm on October 1, 2020 for what I am positive will be a marvelous trip.

If you have more questions about this trip, please reach out to me.

Juan (5-one-2-7-Five-1-Seven-7-ate-3, diezcaballos@gmail.com)

Club Sponsors

The following individuals who made presentations to our club in 2017/2019. Please follow the links to get more information on the services they provide. You won't be disappointed.

Marcus Rodriguez – <http://livingwatersflyfishing.com/> Central Texas Guide

Capt. Billy Trimble – <http://trimbleflyfishing.com/> Fly Fishing Rockport/Texas Coastal Bend

Chris Johnson – <http://livingwatersflyfishing.com/> Living Waters Fly Shop and Central Texas Guide

Pat Dorsey – <http://www.bluequillangler.com/> Fly Fishing Colorado

Capt. Scott Hamilton – <http://www.flyfishingextremes.com/> Fly Fishing Florida's Atlantic Coast

Capt. Eric Glass – <http://www.captainericglass.com/> Fly Fishing South Padre Island

Kevin Stubbs – <http://www.expedition-outfitters.net/> Fly Fishing the Devils River

Kevin Hutchison – <http://hillcountryflyfishers.com/> Fly Fishing the Hill Country

Capt. Steve Soulé – <http://www.theshallowist.com/index.asp> Fly Fishing Galveston

Jeff Davis – <http://allwaterguides.com/jeff-davis/> Fly Fishig the lower Colorado River

Jud Cole – <http://centraltexasflyfishing.com/> Central Texas and Colorado

Capt. Rus Schwausch – <http://www.epicanglingadventure.com/> Fly Fishing Southwest Alaska

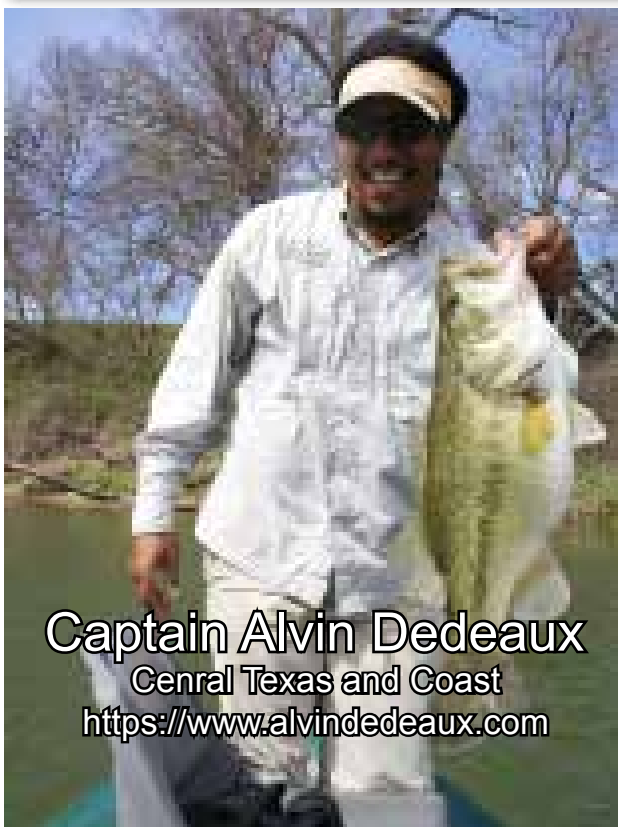
Nick Streit – <https://taosflyshop.com/flyguide/main> New Mexico and Southern Colorado

Capt. Randy and Truette Cawfield – <http://www.lagunamadre.net/styled-33/index.html>

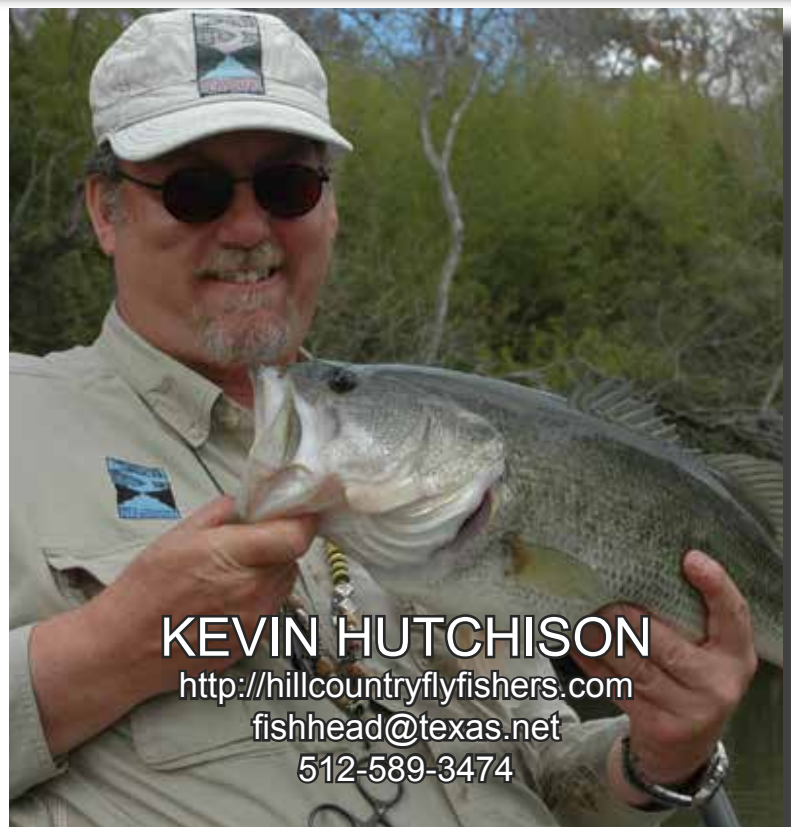
Lower Laguna Madre

Pat Vanek – BousqueValleyFlyFishing@gmail.com Rivers of Central TX

Capt. Alvin Dedeaux – <https://www.alvindedeaux.com> Central Texas and Texas Coast



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Texas Coastal Bend

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Capt. Scott Hamilton
Fly Fish Jupiter, Florida

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Capt. Fred Lynch
Fly Fish Corpus Christi

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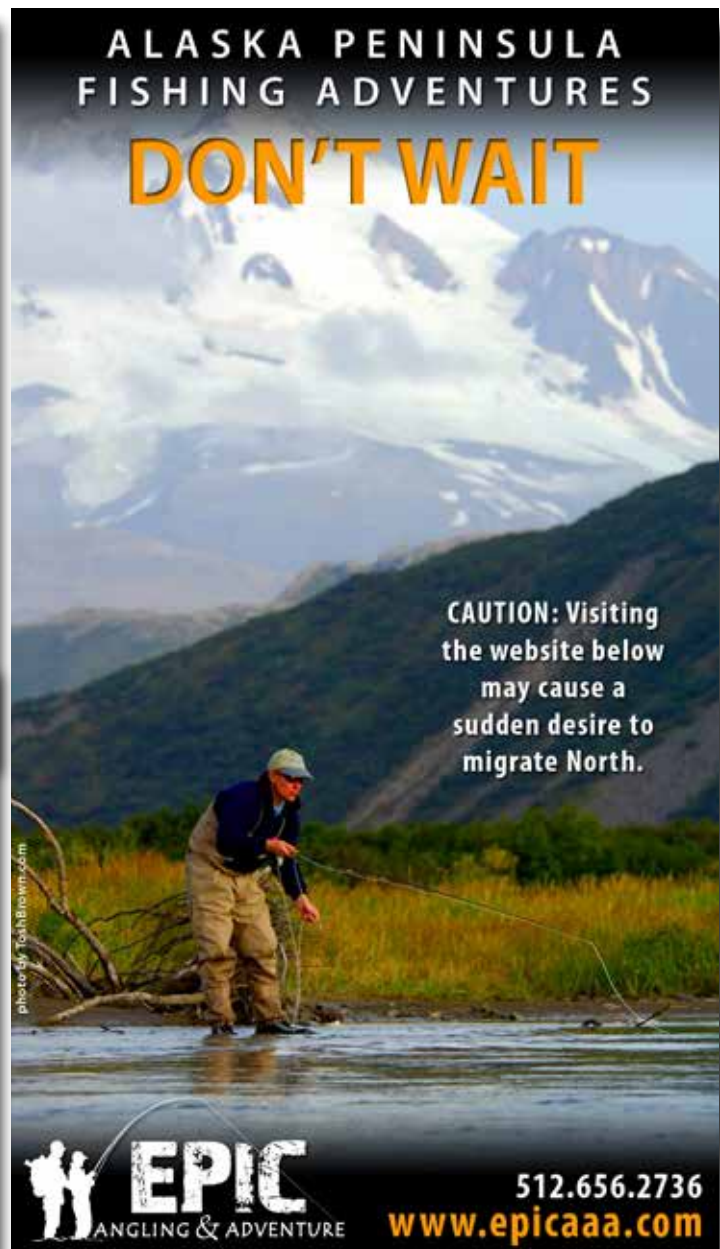
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