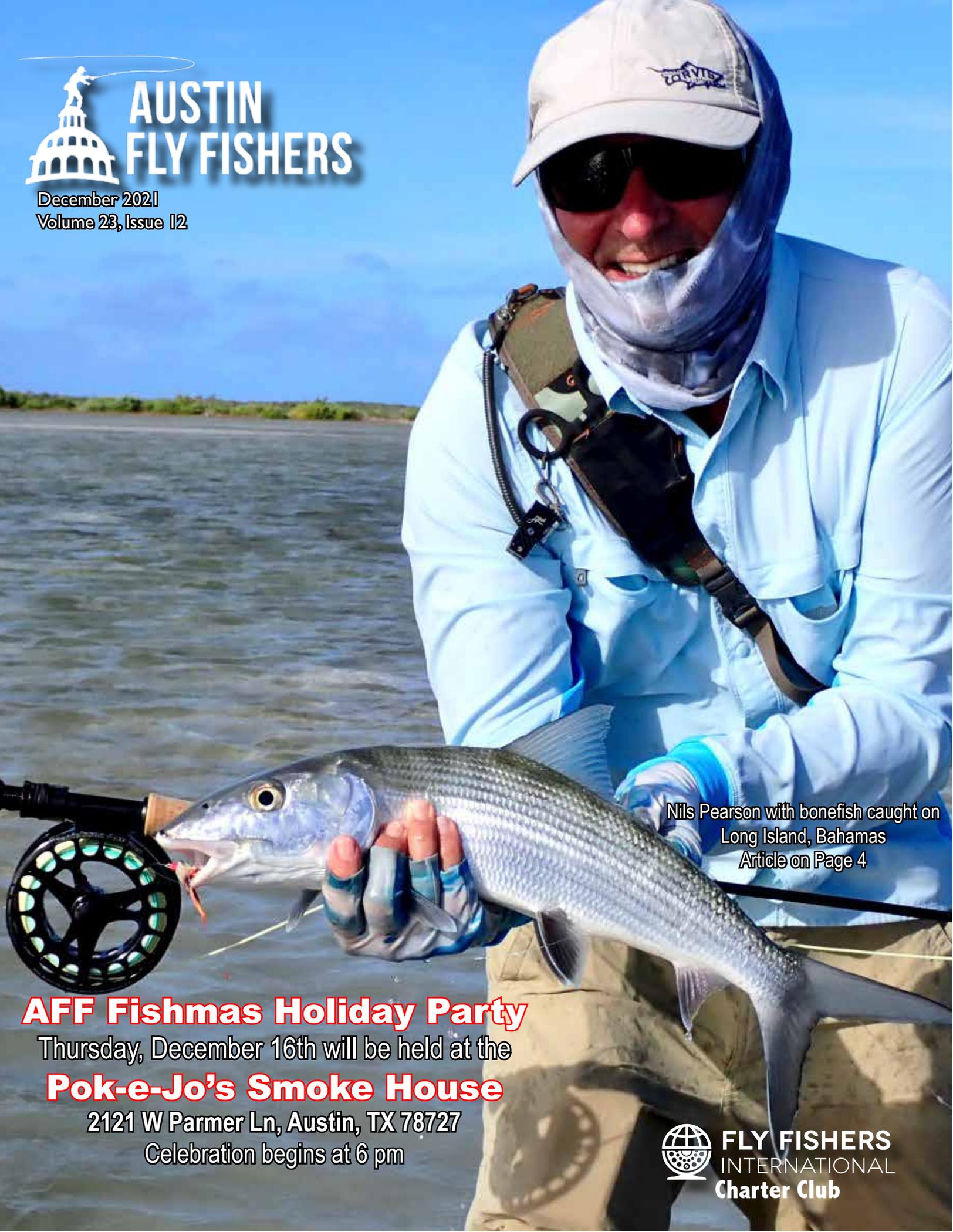




# AUSTIN FLY FISHERS

December 2021

Volume 23, Issue 12



Nils Pearson with bonefish caught on  
Long Island, Bahamas  
Article on Page 4

## **AFF Fishmas Holiday Party**

Thursday, December 16th will be held at the

## **Pok-e-Jo's Smoke House**

2121 W Parmer Ln, Austin, TX 78727

Celebration begins at 6 pm



**FLY FISHERS**  
INTERNATIONAL  
Charter Club

# President's Message by David Bush

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Dave Bush

### Vice President

Scott Kerrigan

### Treasurer

Jim Robinson

### Interm Secretary

Nils Pearson

### Past President

Shawn Riggs

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### Merchandise

Scott Kerrigan

### Membership

Shawn Riggs

### Newsletter

Nils Pearson

### Outings

Juan Shepperd

### SKIFF

Dave Hill

Manuel Pena

### Project Healing Water

Dave Hill

### Webmaster

Brandon Rabke

### Directors at Large

Doug Kierklewski

Jeff Hoelter

To contact officers:

[Info@AustinFlyFishers.com](mailto:Info@AustinFlyFishers.com)

Thanks to everyone who turned out for our meeting last month. It was our first indoor in-person meeting since we switched to online meetings in 2020. Frankly, the turnout was better than I expected so it was good to see a bunch of familiar faces and some new ones as well. Chris Johnson, owner of Living Waters Fly Shop in Round Rock, was our speaker, and he made an excellent case for Tenkara trout fishing. A poll of attendees indicated the desire to have a holiday get-together, so that's what we'll be doing this month.

For our December meeting on Thursday the 16th, we will be having a BBQ dinner and a Casting For Recovery fundraiser at Pok-e-Jo's Smoke House at 2121 W Parmer Lane. We will start gathering at 6:00 pm, and will begin eating around 7:00. Attendees can go through Pok-e-Jo's normal cafeteria-style line to get whatever they want for dinner and pay for their meal. As a regular diner at Pok-e-Jo's for more than 40 years, I have to say everything I have had there is very good. In fact, their homemade sausage is still the best I've ever had, and I have a bunch of friends who would agree.

We will have a private dining room where we will also have Casting For Recovery fundraiser items available to bid on. For those unfamiliar with CFR, it is a non-profit whose mission "is to enhance the lives of women with breast cancer by connecting them to each other and nature through the therapeutic sport of fly fishing." Our club's annual goal is to raise enough funds to sponsor at least one participant to the organization's signature outdoor retreats. I encourage all meeting attendees to help us support this terrific organization.

Recently, Fly Fishers International, our club sponsor, has requested that each attendee to one of our events complete a "Hold Harmless Agreement." Under the current health safety circumstances we're all dealing with, this has become a common request, and I wanted to make everyone aware of FFI's new policy.

Our slate of officer candidates for 2022 is shaping up well, but we're still in need of a

candidate for Vice President. The primary role of the position is to line up the program for our monthly meetings and to fill in for the President if necessary. While lining up monthly speakers or activities may seem daunting to some, I've discovered that club members are a wealth of ideas that make the job easier than it may appear. If you're interested in volunteering for this position, feel free to get in touch and we can discuss the opportunity.

Whatever your faith traditions are or are not, and however you celebrate the holidays or do not, I wish you good health, prosperity and the love of family and friends. In my faith tradition we celebrate Christmas and wish those who celebrate the same a...

Merry Christmas!

Dave

## Financial Report

by Jim Robinson

11/1/2021 to 11/30/2021

<b>Begin Bal. Checking</b>	<b>\$21,210.46</b>
<b>Income:</b>	
SKIFF (Donation)	\$400.00
Merchandise	\$155.00
Auction	\$45.00
Rod (SKIFF)	<u>\$200.00</u>
Total Income	\$900.00
<b>Disbursements</b>	
Brandon (website)	\$21.17
Bob Maindell (SKIFF)	<u>\$1,734.98</u>
Total Disbursements	\$1,756.15
<b>Net</b>	<b>(\$856.15)</b>
Unencumbered:	\$12,666.94
Encumbered Funds:	
Casting for Recovery	\$2,365.52
SKIFF	\$5,321.85
<b>Ending Adj Bal-Checking</b>	<b>\$20,354.31*</b>

\*Still not identified the purpose of the ACH charge in Sept.

## SKIFF Program by Bob Maindelle



Dear Friends of S.K.I.F.F.,

Following our armed forces' withdrawal from Afghanistan, the operational tempo at Fort Hood has slowed significantly. During the month of November, I received no requests for SKIFF fishing trips.

Regardless, we still have a few "irons in the fire" I wanted to keep you up-to-date on.

First, we are still in the running for the annual McBride Foundation grant. That organization has had its operations significantly altered by COVID, so things are running later than in past years. Our application requested \$1,000.00 toward putting military kids on the water.

Next, we had an individual donate \$500 this month. This gentleman is a client of my in the agricultural fertilizer industry and was impressed by the work we do as I spoke with him about it during a fishing trip on Stillhouse over the summer.

Finally, with kids from the Fort Hood area soon to go on Christmas break, I've coordinated an "ad" on our locally popular Fort Hood Area Events Facebook page letting families know I have set aside one weekend (18 Dec.) and one weekday (23 Dec.) during that break to offer free SKIFF fishing trips to kids separated from their parents during the holidays.

For those of you new to Austin Fly Fishers and/or unfamiliar with SKIFF, SKIFF is an acronym for Soldiers' Kids Involved in Fishing Fun. It is a program now in its 12th year, sponsored by the Austin Fly Fishers, and supported by individuals and entities, all of whom desire that kids separated from a parent by that parent's military duty, be given an opportunity to experience the outdoors through fishing during that time of separation, free of charge. The program offers a time of respite for the home-front parents who may need a short break from single-parenting.

Thank you all for your support, and especially Dave Hill and Manuel Pena who check in on me regularly.

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

--Bob Maindelle

# Wading the Long Island Flats

by Nils Pearson

Long Island is located about 165 miles southeast of Nassau. The island is 80 miles long and 4 miles wide at its widest point. It has two airports (Stella Maris and Deadman's Cay) and a population of 3000 inhabitants. One unique feature of the island is the large flats located across from Deadman's Cay. In the 1970's Diamond Crystal company built a series of dikes that formed ponds for saltwater evaporation. During its operation, the sea water was pumped into the ponds, after the water evaporated the remaining salt was extracted and processed for commercial sale until the factory closed in 1982. After that, some attempts were made to turn the ponds into shrimp farms but these endeavors were soon failed and the area was abandoned. Over time, the system of dikes failed and connecting channels allowed seawater to ebb and flow into these ponds with the tides. Before long, bonefish and other aquatic life became established in these ponds and miles of hard bottomed flats came to life.

The Long Island Bonefishing Lodge is conveniently located directly across from these flats. What is unique about this lodge is the type of fly fishing it offers. Each day, fishermen are ferried over to a different section of the flats by a guide, discharged onto the sand to wade on their own while the guide remains at the boat. If you are into DIY fishing, this is

a great option that I haven't seen anywhere else in the Bahamas. The fishermen stalk bonefish on the flat and return to the boat at noon for lunch. After lunch, the guide takes the fishermen to another flat for the remainder of the afternoon.

Brandon Rabke and I spent three and a half days wading these flats. After the guide dropped us off, gave us minimal instructions about fishing the area and directed us to a section of the flat to meet for lunch, we went in search of bonefish. As the sun rose and the cloud cover dissipated, the lights came on as we scanned the crystal-clear water for our moving targets. We encountered scattered bonefish as singles and doubles and a couple of times each day we came upon small schools. Brandon was far more successful than me at locating and single fish and patiently stalking and capturing his prey. My ability to spot single fish in the distance is very poor. However, a number of times I just happened to be in the right place at the right time when schools of bones came swimming toward me.

My most memorable encounter with a school of bones came when I thought I saw a large dark spot out in the distance on the bright white sand. I asked Brandon whether he thought that was anything. He said he couldn't tell. As I stood still and watched the dark spot it appeared to be moving but I wasn't sure. Before long, it got closer. I could see at least 5 bonefish



## Wading the Long Island Flats cont.

leading the pack coming at me. When the school was about 150 feet from me, I cast a gotcha about 70 feet directly in the path of the oncoming fish. As the school reached my fly, I made it a long slow strip then stopped. The first bone in the school picked it up but spit it out immediately. Without recasting, I made another gentle slow strip to stop when another bone picked up the fly and held it long enough for me to strip set the hook. That fish proceeded to swim with the school until my line was on the reel and the drag began to slow him down. Sensing the tension of the line, he took off on his first run. Within seconds he took all of my fly line and a hundred feet of backing before he stopped. After a number of runs and retrieves, he was worn out and got close enough for me to

grab the leader. As I pulled the leader toward me with a loose grip, got down on one knee, and secured the fish. Fortunately, Brandon was close by and came over to take a picture on this beautiful bonefish.

If you are interested in wading some Bahamas flats on your own, I suggest you check out the Long Island Bonefishing Lodge. The lodge offers airconditioned cottages that are very well maintained, excellent meals, friendly accommodating staff, and reasonable prices. Just keep in mind that when you are searching these unfamiliar flats on your own, you can catch some big beautiful bones but don't expect to have lots of hookups. On my best day, I caught 3 quality bonefish.



Brandon walking a flat



# Outings -Floating the Dechutes River in the Fall

by Juan Shepperd

I'm thinking ahead. Many people feel the period between mid September and mid October is the best time to fish. Anywhere. End of story. Period. I don't know about your place, but with global warming, mosquitos are still buzzing at my house even in October. What better way than to get out of Texas for a while and treat yourself to a fly fishing trip out west? Not only will you escape the Texas heat, you'll likely see some Fall foliage.

I've secured a guided Deschutes River Float trip in Oregon with 3 nights lodging, meals prepared for you each day, shuttle, and 4 days of guided fishing from 10/9/22 - 10/12/2022 for \$2400. Gratuity and alcohol is not included. BYOB. The Deschutes is Oregon's best known river. It's a desert oasis with wild rainbows, hearty steelhead, whitewater and stunning scenery. I'll be fishing for rainbow (redside) trout primarily in the 15 -20 inch, but I hope to land a steelhead, fresh from the Pacific and running up the Columbia River through the Deschutes and on his way upstream further still to where he was born.

If this trip interests you, let me know.

-Juan



# 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 Rodriquez** – <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

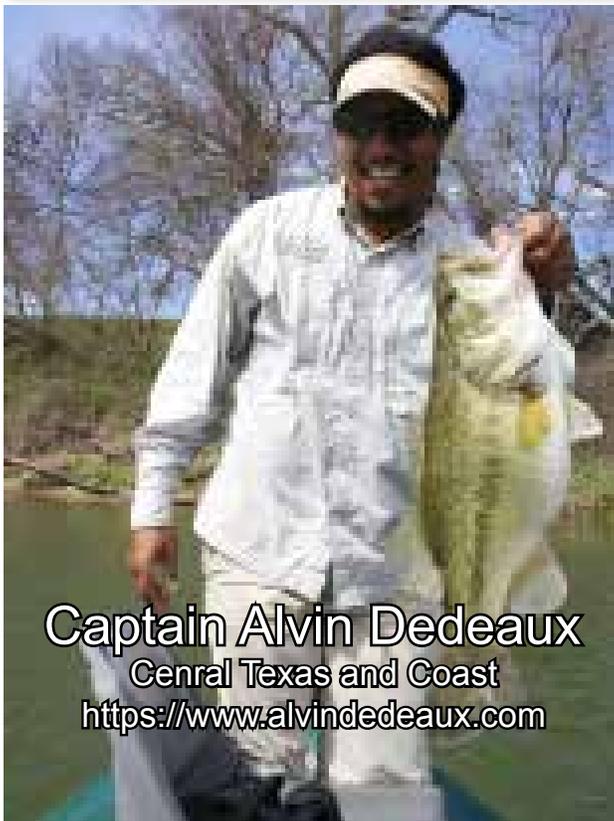
**Nick Streit** – <https://taosflyshop.com/flyguide/main> New Mexico and Southern Colorado

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

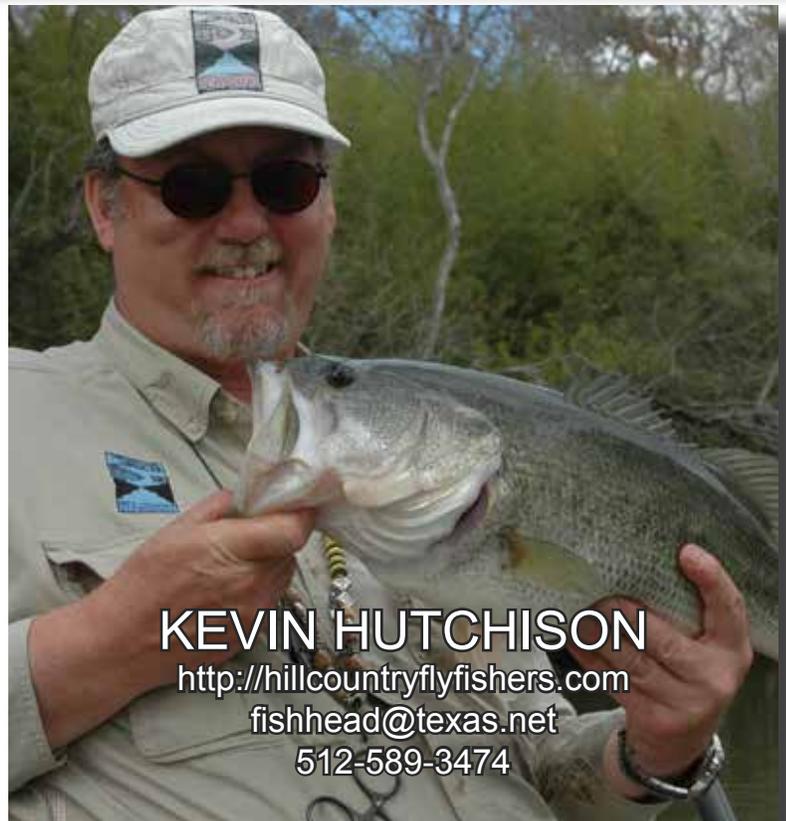
Lower Laguna Madre

**Pat Vanek** – [BousqueValleyFlyFishing@gmail.com](mailto:BousqueValleyFlyFishing@gmail.com) Rivers of Central TX

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



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**Captain Eric Glass**

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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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(361) 533-4227



# Kevin Stubbs

[Expedition-Outfitters.net](http://Expedition-Outfitters.net)

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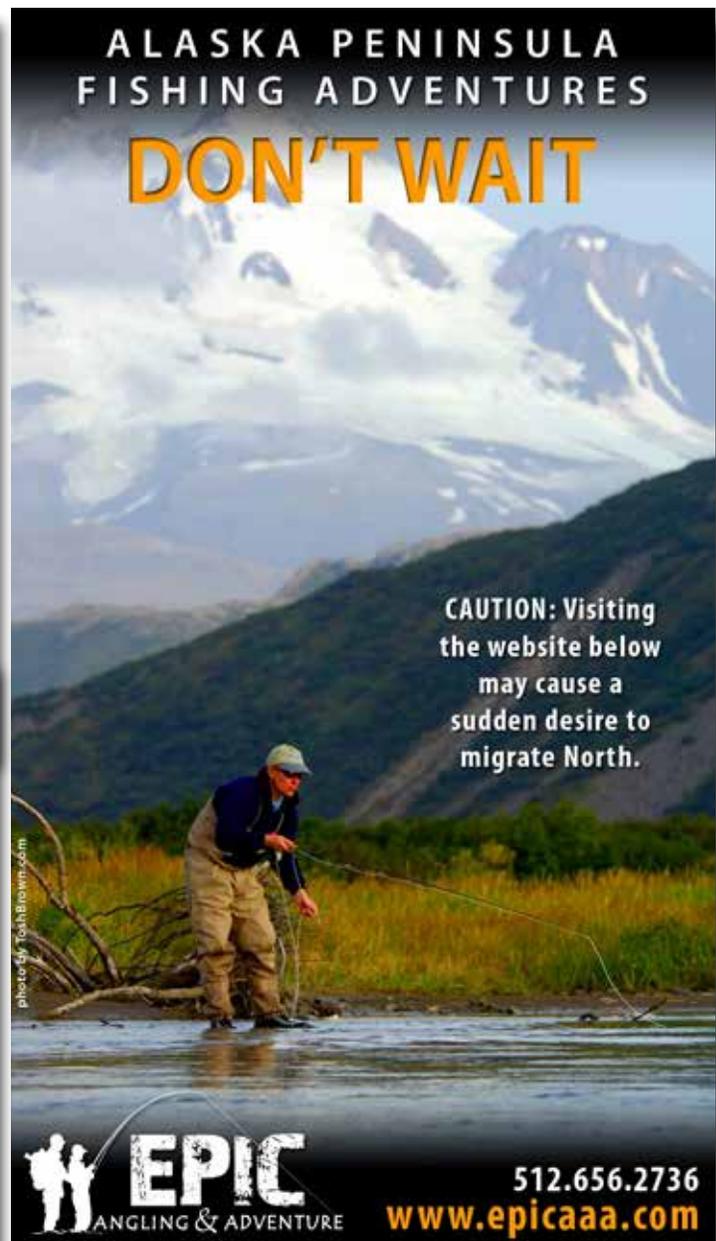
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