

Austin Fly Fishers

A member club of the
International Federation of Fly Fishers
May 2016
Volume 18, Issue 5



Club Meeting
Thursday, May 19
Northwest Recreation Center
6:00 Fly Tying Demos by Mike Morphew
7:00 Rus Schwaush will present two fishing
destinations-of-a-lifetime located on the
Alaska Peninsula – Alaska Wilderness
SAFARI and Alaska Wilderness OUTPOST

Cover Photo
Hermon Bain Fly Fishing Guide
Bowen Sound, Andros Island, Bahamas

May 21 Lower Colorado River Cleanup
details on page 4

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President's Message by Matt Bennett

T feel like I talk about the weather in every one of these, but I'm still amazed by the radical turnaround we've experienced with our water supply in the past year or so. Pretty much all of the Highland Lakes are full for the first time in about 8 years. In fact, most of them are so full that releases are being done, making our rivers a little tough to fish. The managing authorities are currently releasing water out of Lake Georgetown, Lake Austin, and Canyon Lake, making the rivers below them tough to fish. This is likely to continue as we get more rain, so please check the flows before heading out to fish. Flows can be checked at the managing authority's web site - Lower Colorado River Authority, Brazos River Authority or Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, depending on the river you're looking for.

In case you forgot, we have our ongoing multispecies tournament going on right now. So far, only seven people have entered the traditional fly side, which the leader being Charles Cresswell with 6 species. On the Tenkara side, we only have two entries, with Jacob Eikstead being in front with 2 total species. I'd encourage you guys to take a few jaunts on some of our local creeks, you might be surprised what you end up with! Some of the more "exotic" fish we had entered a few years ago were Redspotted Sunfish, Mexican Tetra, and lots of crazy saltwater fish. There's a good opportunity coming up with one of our local fly shops, Living Waters Fly Fishing, who is hosting their annual one-fly species contest on Brushy Creek on May 28th. Good chance to pick up a handful of our "normal" species with a chance at carp, redhorse suckers, warmouth, and a few others.

We have a big event coming up to help clean up some of our home water, the LoCol Trash Bash on May 21st. More information can be found below, but please consider coming out to help. Even if you don't have a kayak (or don't want to bring yours) there will be plenty of non-kayak volunteers needed to shuttle, help

with parking, etc. They're keeping an eye on the flows in case we get another rain event, so we will send out more information if need be. Please register if you plan on attending. I'd like to get a large showing of club members - this is our home water. Let's keep it clean. Feel free to contact me or the guys at Orvis, Jef and Chris, if you have any questions.



Financial Report by Shawn Riggs

4/1/2016 - 4/30/2016

Beginning Bal. Checking \$12,274.65

Income:

Dues (AFF&FFF)	\$599.91
Auction	\$185.00
SKIFF	<u>\$1,540.00</u>
Total Income	\$2,324.91

Disbursements:

Meeting Refreshments	\$27.35
Net Hop Web Works	\$300.00
Casting for Recovery	<u>\$2,000.00</u>
Total Disbursements	\$2,327.35
Net	(\$2.44)

Ending Balance-Checking \$12,272.21

Casting for Recovery	\$670.30
SKIFF Total Donations	\$25,351.54
SKIFF Total Disbursements	\$20,307.57
SKIFF Balance on Hand	\$5,043.97

May Speaker

Rus Schwausch

At our next meeting, Rus Schwausch (pronounced “ss-wow-sh”) of EPIC Angling & Adventure will tell us about two fishing destinations-of-a-lifetime located on the Alaska Peninsula – Alaska Wilderness SAFARI and Alaska Wilderness OUTPOST.

Alaska Wilderness SAFARI, the more sophisticated operation, is written up in the book *Fifty Places to Fly Fish Before You Die* as “arguably the most isolated coastal fishing camp in Alaska and one of the best places in the world to pursue chrome-bright, ocean-fresh salmon.” But if you want, there’s a lot more to do than just fish. This eco-diverse destination also offers daily wildlife viewing, waterfall hikes, tide pools and beach combing, plus helicopter fly-out fishing during their “Late” season when the silver salmon are running.

His second operation is Alaska Wilderness OUTPOST. It’s a rustic, early season camp offering excellent small stream fishing for rainbow trout, grayling, king salmon and more. Short on frills, this program is for the die-hard fisherman focused on quality fishing rather than amenities.

A little background: beginning in 1995, Rus and his buddies explored and fished remote rivers on unguided float trips over three different summers. They would fly with all their equipment to the headwaters by bush plane, then float and fish over 100 mile stretches for two weeks at a time. These trips “infected” Rus with Alaska and steered his life in a completely new direction. Giving up his full time engineering job, he started guiding in Alaska during the summer of 2001 while continuing engineering consulting work the other 8 months back in Austin. In 2004 Rus took over the operation where he first guided, Alaska Wilderness SAFARI, and is coming up on season number sixteen there.

You can find out more about his operations at www.epicaaa.com, or just come to the next meeting to see some Alaska-sized fish and incredible scenery on the big screen.



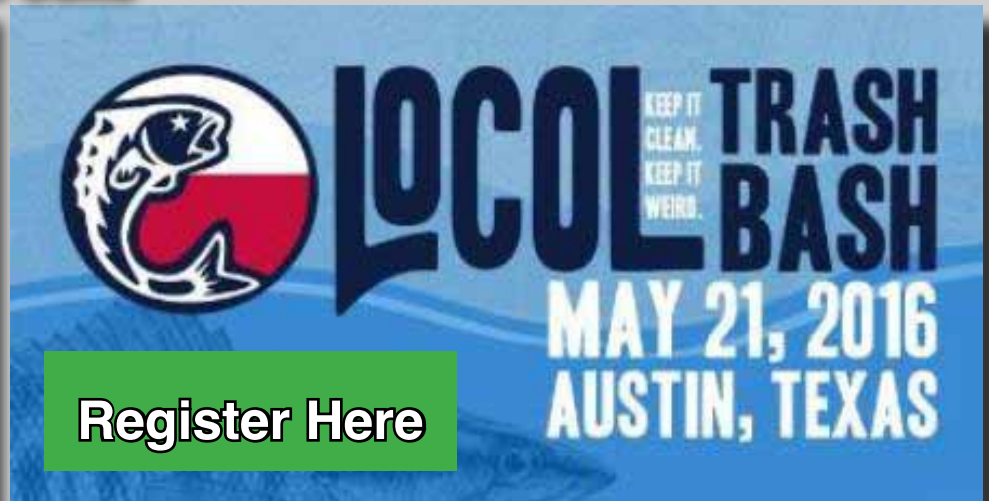
Club Announcements Cont.

The **LoCol Trash Bash** is a community volunteer event to clean up the Lower Colorado River in east Austin. The event will focus on the stretch of river from the Montopolis Bridge (Hwy 183) to the Texas River School property about 3.5 miles downstream. Volunteers

MUST REGISTER - - - ->

for the event before midnight on May 17. Teams of volunteers will be organized to clean assigned stretches of the river.

If you would like to supply your own canoe or kayak, please drop it off at the Montopolis Bridge BEFORE check-in at the Texas River School (9909 Lorado Dr, Austin TX 78725). Volunteers will be at the put-in to watch over your gear. For those without any personal watercraft,



a limited number of loaners (provided by the Texas River School, Austin Canoe and Kayak and Diablo Paddlesports) which will be provided at no charge.

Volunteer check-in will begin at 7am at the Texas River School with a shuttle provided to the put in at the Montopolis Bridge. Parking is limited so volunteers

are encouraged to carpool.

Take out will be at the Texas River School with a BBQ lunch and beer provided by Live Oak Brewing Co. A raffle to benefit the Texas River School with over \$4000 in prizes (tickets will be sold at the event only, must be present to win; tickets are 5 for \$20 and CASH ONLY).

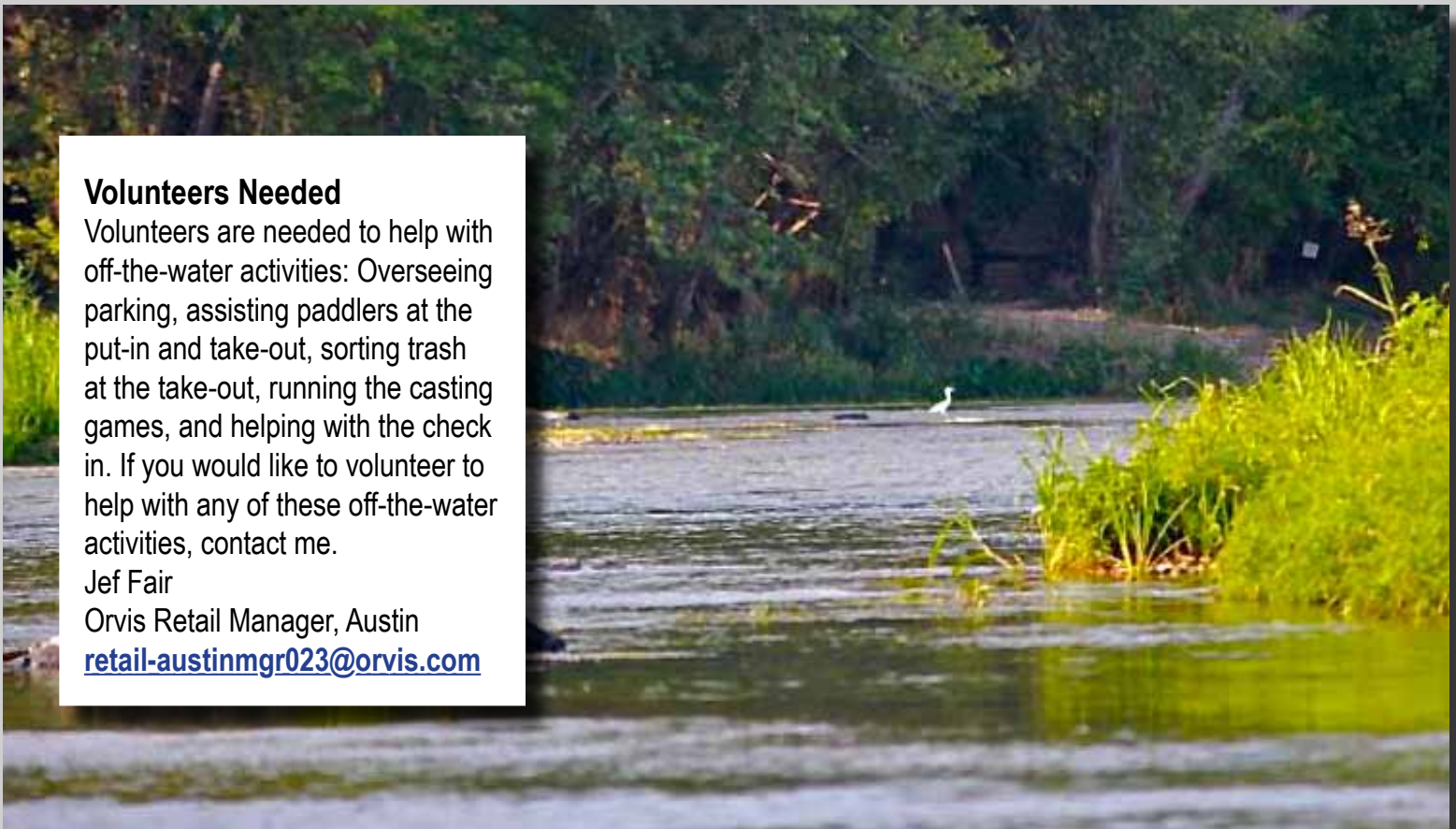
Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to help with off-the-water activities: Overseeing parking, assisting paddlers at the put-in and take-out, sorting trash at the take-out, running the casting games, and helping with the check in. If you would like to volunteer to help with any of these off-the-water activities, contact me.

Jef Fair

Orvis Retail Manager, Austin

retail-austinmgr023@orvis.com



Andros Island, Bahamas

by Nils Pearson

In my last dispatch from the Bahamas, the 6 AFF comrades were leaving Great Inagua. After our 7-day stay on the island, we were heading our separate ways –Steven and Phil would catch an evening flight back to Austin, Ed and Carroll would catch a flight home the next morning, and Brandon and I were setting off to Andros that afternoon.

After missing our scheduled connecting flight to Andros because of a rain delayed takeoff from Inagua, Brandon and I were fortunate to be directed to a local carrier at General Aviation. This is not a regularly scheduled airline. As far as I can tell, this local carrier flies over to Andros when they have enough passengers to fill the plane. About an hour after we paid for our ticket, we boarded the 8-seater for the 15-minute flight to the island.

After arriving, we got a taxi to Hank's Place which would serve as our home for the next couple of days. Brandon had made reservations for us to stay at Hank's Place in Fresh Creek because other fly fishermen he had met on previous trips would also be staying there. Unfortunately as we found out upon arrival, there had been a mix up and Hank was overbooked. Nonetheless, in typical Bahamian style, Hank and his employee were busy cleaning out his office for our accommodations.

After stacking our gear in our room, we asked Hank where we might purchase some bottled water. He told us to accompany him and his wife Eva and that they would drive us to the store. We drove about 3 blocks to the local shop and got ourselves 24 bottles of water and some snacks. After leaving, Hank drove us over to a local conch salad stand. As we sat outside, the proprietor diced up onions, peppers, carrots, and conch into a large pile. After he folded this mixture together, he put it into Styrofoam bowls and squeezed fresh orange and lime juice over the contents. After paying for this local dish, we returned to Hank's Place, walked out on to the large covered dock area that was an extension of Hank's restaurant/bar, and started eating.

As we looked out on Fresh Creek while eating our conch salad, we met a fellow fly fisherman named Gary who was climbing up from his skiff onto the dock after fishing the creek. Gary was a large fellow with white hair looking a little weary from his day on the water. After he settled down at a table next to us and ordered a beer, we started a conversation with him to learn more about fishing Fresh Creek. In a wonderful low-key manner, Gary took out his maps and patiently pointed out a number of good areas for bones just up Fresh Creek.

For the next 2 days, we rented a small skiff from Hank and waded the flats along the creek that Gary had suggested.



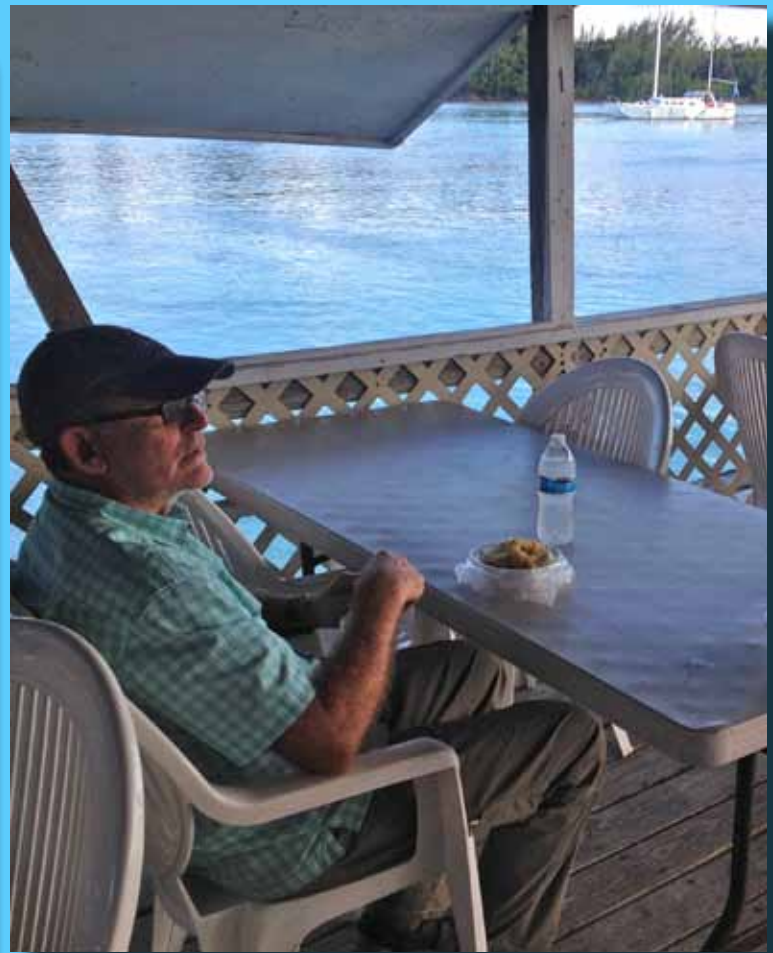
We came to find out that Gary had fished all over the Bahamas for the past 20 years and had settled on Fresh Creek because it was uncrowded and offered the best fishing opportunities. He liked the area so much that he came to the island every year for weeks at a time. He was so attached to the place that he had purchased a skiff of his own and a truck to get around the island. He typically stayed at Hank's.

Now here's something I didn't know about Andros Island. It is the largest of the Bahamian Islands. However, what makes it such a terrific destination for fly fishing is that it is not really an island. Andros is a collection of hundreds of small islands and cays connected by mangrove estuaries and tidal swamplands. As you might expect, this makes for a wonderful ecosystems for shrimp, crabs, and bonefish in search of these crustaceans.

With Gary's suggested fishing spots fresh in our minds, Brandon started our outboard and guided us up to the first flat that Gary had suggested. The hard rock bottom made setting the anchor a little tricky, but after a couple of attempts we found a spot where our anchor could be secured. Although Brandon had a sore throat and was coming down with a cold, he waded the flats for the next 2 days and found bones. Yes just like on Inagua, Brandon always had a sense of where to look for fish. Being not nearly as skilled at finding fish, I simply asked Brandon where he thought I search for bones. And following his advice, I too found fish. Each day, I had a good 10 shots at bonefish and caught 1 each day.

During our evening meal on our next to last evening on the Island, we sat out on Hank's deck eating dinner. We again met up with Gary and began talking about fishing. After a guest on another table overheard our conversation, he introduced himself as a retired person from the states who had fished these waters since his childhood. He owned a home on another island but kept coming back to Fresh Creek because he loved the atmosphere. He then recommended a guide that he thought was terrific. After hearing this guides name, Gary suggested that we contact a guide named Hermon Bain. Gary maintained that Hermon was one of the finest guides on the island. The gentleman from the other table would have none of it and carried on how Hermon was not nearly as skilled as his candidate. Before leaving, Gary looked me in the eye, slipped me a piece of paper with Hermon's telephone number, shook my hand, and left without speaking a word.

In comparison to the other guest's bluster, Gary was complete unpretentiousness gave me great confidence in his recommendation. I called Hermon that evening and scheduled to go fishing with for my final day on the island. Brandon's



cold was not improving and he told me that he would not be able to join me for the next day's fishing. That being the case, I asked the members of the fly fishing group that Brandon had fish with previously on Crooked Island. And one fellow in the group, Hans, took me up on the offer.

The next morning, Hermon picked us up and drove us over to Bowen Sound. We would spend our day intermittently wading and fishing from the boat. We came to find out that Hermon had been fishing this large body of water since he was a child. While Hermon was poling the boat and one of us stood on the bow preparing to cast as soon as a bonefish was spotted. To pass the time, we had rambling conversations. During one of these conversations, Hans spoke of his fishing experience during the previous week on the Northern Bight. This is the stretch of water that separates North Andros from South Andros and has been much publicized as an exceptional fly fishing area. According to Hans, each morning and his friends headed out to fish there were more than 20 other boats heading to the same fishing spots. In addition, the guides he fished with had little interest in finding fish and typically were off the water by 3:30. After hearing about Hans' experience, I knew that the Northern Bight would be a place to avoid on future fishing trips.

My fishing experience with Hermon stands in stark contrast to what Hans experienced on the Northern Bight. Bowen Sound is an enormous area about 10 miles long on the east side of Andros between Fresh Creek and Cargill Creek. During our entire day on the water, we didn't see another boat. We probably got on to the water about 8:15 am and didn't leave until 6 pm. For the entire day, we searched the flats on foot and in the boat looking for bones. Despite cloudy skies and winds gusting up to 30 mph Hermon put me on to at least 30 bones of which I landed 10. Hans more than doubled my catch because he was far more successful at casting into the ferocious wind. If I wasn't leaving the next morning, I would have fished with Hermon another day.

Every once in a while, you have the good fortune to have truly exceptional fly fishing experience. Hank and his wife went out on their way to help us get situated. Gary shared his extensive knowledge of the local waters without hesitation. And I would say that Hermon Bain was surely one of the best guides I have ever fished with. If it were up to me, I would nominate him for induction into the International Fly Fishing Guides Hall of Fame. All and all, my experiences on Andros just whet my appetite for another trip to the island. When I make it back to the island I will get together with Hermon to fish Bowen Sound again and plan a trip to Joulter's Cay an enormous flat about 9 miles north of Andros.



SKIFF Program

by Bob Maindelle

Dear AFF and Friends of SKIFF,

On this past Tuesday afternoon I had the joy of fishing with Jonathan Owens, the minister of music at Memorial Baptist Church in Killeen, TX, along with Caleb Woodside, one of the youth at that church, and a member of the church's band. The two share a common interest in music, and I offered to take them out so they could continue to build on their new friendship. Though still a teenager, Caleb has risen to the rank of manager at the local Freddy's Burger restaurant, and has plans to pursue a business administration degree, possibly at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.

This was the third SKIFF trip I've conducted for the 2016 season. SKIFF stands for Soldiers' Kids Involved in Fishing Fun, and exists to get soldiers' kids out on the water while those soldiers are away from their families due to military duty. Caleb's dad, U.S. Army Captain Matthew Woodside, is a chaplain serving the First Cavalry Division in South Korea for a 9-month rotation.

We were plagued with heavy winds this afternoon. Winds were blowing 18 to 20 straight line, with occasional higher gusts. The white bass I have been finding on Stillhouse have been heavily congregated, but in very deep water. Wind and deep water are a difficult combination as less experienced anglers tend to have difficulty in detecting when their lure is or is not on bottom. This was the case for some of our trip today. Nonetheless, we were able to overcome that issue and land a total of 48 fish, using both



an "easing" and a "smoking" tactic.

The "smoking" tactic typically first comes into play as the water reaches 72°. We were just shy of that mark today, but the fish still responded fairly well. Our catch of 48 fish consisted of 47 white bass and one freshwater drum. Thanks to fairly heavy cloud cover, the evening bite wrapped up right at 7:50 PM.

If you are a military family and you or your spouse is away on duty of any sort, please call me if I can help your situation by providing a free fishing trip. Parents are welcome to attend, and are equally welcome to take a break from their own kids and leave them in my care for the 4 hour trip.

TALLY = 48 fish, all caught and released

I would like to support the program by sponsoring SKIFF kids. It costs \$65 to sponsor one child for a fishing trip.

To make a donation using the internet,

go to <http://austinflyfishers.com/skiff.html> or send a check payable to Austin Fly Fishers. Mail your check to Austin Fly Fishers, SKIFF Program, P.O. Box 10504, Austin, TX 78766

The Fly Tyer's Corner

Photos and Recipe by Mike Mephew

A Very Simple Froggie Fly

This simple to tie frog has accounted for a lot of fish for me, it can be tied weedless or as I have tied it here without a weed guard.

Materials

Hook: size 6 any make will do but make sure it is a heavy duty

hook

Thread" danvilles olive waxed

Tail and underbody: olive Elk hair

Body and head: a pre cut piece of green foam, I have used a spotted foam but you can use just green and color with a marker pen

Eyes: simple medium to small doll eyes

Step 1: Add a thread base to the hook and tie in the tail



Step 2: Wind the waste elk to the eye and flare it, cut off excess. Wind thread back to the hook bend.



Step 3: Brush a little super glue on the underbody



Step 4: Tie in the foam and create segments moving along towards the eye



Step 5: The head section should be resting on the spun hair at the eye. Tie in some silicone legs behind the head



Step 6: Bring the thread to the eye and whip finish



Step 7: To complete the frog, attach a couple of eyes with super glue



Tying Tips by Mike Morpew

Cheap Dubbing Brush Maker

I will often create a dubbing brush for certain flies but the clips for holding hair etc. can be expensive to say the least!

My wife came home with these plastic clips the other day. I stole them immediately much to her dismay!!! These work superbly for holding materials before inserting them into a dubbing loop or as I often do a split tying thread.

For hair, simply cut a strip on the hide (e.g., Rabbit, squirrel, possum) and hold the fibers in the clip. Carefully cut off the hide strip and place the ends of the hair into the dubbing loop as shown. Carefully release the clip and spin the thread. This tool is also great for synthetic dubbings as well for creating dubbing brushes.



Club Sponsors

The following individuals who made presentations to our club in 2015/2016. Please follow the links to get more information on the services they provide. You won't be disappointed.

Kelly Galloup – <http://www.slideinn.com/> Fly Fishing the Madison River

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

Tim Cole – <http://www.austinreptileservice.net/> Information and presentations on snakes

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

Banning Collins – <http://www.classv.net/> Outdoor Marketing Services

Capt. Jeff Johnson – <http://www.flyfishrockport.com/> Fly Fishing Rockport

Jeff Davis – <http://www.flyfishrockport.com/> Fly Fishig the lower Colorado River

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



Hermon Bain

Fresh Creek | Bowen Sound | Joulters Cay
Andros Island, Bahamas

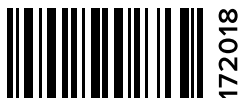
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