



AUSTIN FLY FISHERS

August 2020
Volume 22, Issue 8



Largemouth Bass caught on Llano River
by Nils Pearson with Jim Gray's Llano
Fox fly that is featured in this month's
Fly Tyer column on page 7



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President's Message by David Bush

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Texas has a long history of excellent fishing opportunities, and I enjoy learning what angling was like back in the day. Fortunately, there are a number of books that were published years ago that you can read to discover what fishing in Texas was like decades ago. Most recently, I finished reading "Fishing Yesterday's Gulf Coast" written by Barney Farley.

Barney Farley was a "legendary" guide who fished out of Port Aransas starting in 1910 and continued to ply the local waters for at least another 50 years. He passed away in 1978, but in the mid-sixties he wrote a series of stories which were eventually published in this book in 2002. I'm grateful that he did, because his tales were not only a pleasure to read, but I learned more about saltwater fishing than you might expect considering his experiences were from so long ago.

Not only was Barney an outstanding guide, but he founded Farley Boat Works in 1914 which continued to operate in Port Aransas until 1973. During his time, Port Aransas was known as "The Tarpon Capital of the World," and his boats were designed to target tarpon which were abundant in the area. Farley's most well-known adventure was in 1937 when then President Franklin Roosevelt visited Port Aransas, and Barney had the honor of hosting the President on one of his boats to try to land some tarpon. Their efforts were successful, and President Roosevelt managed to land several nice tarpon. A signed tarpon scale from one of his catches is proudly displayed along with many others from the era at the historic Tarpon Inn in Port Aransas. Details of the President's fascinating fishing trip are captured in the first chapter and are a great start to the book.

While many of you are probably aware of FDR's famous visit to Port A and perhaps even Farley's role, you may not know that Barney was very likely the father of saltwater fly fishing. If not in general, he certainly was in Texas. In 1932, Barney was introduced to fly fishing for bass while on vacation to a well-stocked private Texas lake. Over a two week period he claims to have caught about 1400 bass on a split-bamboo fly rod. It didn't take long into that vacation before his thoughts shifted to how he might apply what he was learning about bass fishing with a fly rod to saltwater.

Upon his return to Port Aransas, before long Barney was catching speckled trout, redfish, sheepshead, and other species in the bays on a fly rod. Saltwater flies didn't exist at that point, so he started out slinging

live shrimp which, of course, added to his success. After that, he went offshore and targeted kingfish and was having a ball. He even moved up to catching tarpon although admitted they were a difficult quarry on the gear of the day. He also made the switch to small spoons and other lures that he could cast with a fly rod. Like many of us, he also had a blast fishing for skipjack on the fly rod when out wanting to have some fun and feel a strong tug on your line.

During his decades on the water, Barney observed a troubling decline of sportfishing and began voicing his concerns before it was popular to do so. He became an outspoken conservationist for saltwater resources during the 1960s. His observations turned out to be very accurate, and some of his recommendations were eventually put into place. His willingness to speak out in support of conservation may be his greatest legacy.

While I'm on the topic of conservation, AFF has always prided itself on helping to improve local water resources. Unfortunately, our Conservation Officer position is currently open so our efforts in this area have sadly stalled. If you feel called to lead our conservation efforts, please get in touch with me. Thanks!

Last week, past AFF President and current Treasurer Jim Robinson underwent major surgery to have a cancerous tumor removed. Fortunately, the surgery went well, the tumor was completely removed, and Jim is resting back at home. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers as he recovers and gets back on his feet.

Like many organizations, we're beginning to get the hang of this online meeting approach although I certainly look forward to getting back to our in-person meetings. This will be our third month of broadcasting our meeting live on Facebook which can also be viewed at a later time. To participate, go to our Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/atxflyfishers/ at 7:00 pm on Thursday, August 20, to join live. Alternatively, if you are a member of the Austin Fly Fishers Facebook Private Group, go to www.facebook.com/groups/22082405715/ at the same time. If possible, I encourage you to join the meeting in real time so you have the opportunity to ask questions of our speakers. We will be going live a bit before 7:00, so feel free to drop in a little early to make sure you're all set up to join in.



August Speaker – Cory Sorel by Scott Kerrigan

Online Event with Cory Sorel

Tying his Lunch Money Fly

Thursday August 20 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, August 20, to access Cory'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.

Cory Sorel is a fly guide with Austin Carp Angler and ties part time through his own Sorel Fly. Carp on the fly became his main focus about three years ago after catching them in the Hill Country. He is a huge advocate for the species and wants to pass his love for carp on to as many anglers as possible.

Cory will be sharing and tying a few of his favorite flies for Hill Country carp. He will also be passing along knowledge from European-style carp fishing that should help you get these finicky fish dialed in.

Financial Report

by Jim Robinson

7/1/2020 to 7/31/2020

Begin Bal. Checking \$18,074.24

Income:

Total Income \$00.00

Disbursements:

S. Kerrigan (Zoom) \$144.89

Total Disbursements \$144.89

Net (\$144.89)

Unencumbered: \$10,058.00

Encumbered Funds:

Casting for Recovery \$2,365.52

SKIFF \$5,505.83

Ending Bal-Checking \$17,929.35



Jetty Fishing in Texas by Austin Orr

A fly fisher unfamiliar with the term 'jetty' will soon see that we are really just talking about a pile of rocks or other hardened structure extending out into a body of water. Depending on where you go, this structure might be called a rock groin, a jetty, a breakwater or seawall. Though the name and location may vary, each offers an opportunity for great fishing.

In Texas, jetties typically 'guard' important shipping lanes or boating channels. The main ocean passes, such as the Aransas Pass, used to naturally shift north or south as the hurricanes and tides dictated. They would often silt shut over the years. Jetties are designed to create an anchor point for the pass and to promote the flow of water through the pass to help flush sand out and keep the pass deep enough for boats to travel through. This results in a lot of water flow, which makes excellent fishing opportunities.

The granite chunks provide a current break, a place for barnacles and algae to find a foothold, and a place for small creatures to hide from the larger. Some estimates place upwards of 600 species of fish and other marine creatures living on, around or immediately offshore of the jetties. That's not counting the much more complex macro (tiny crustaceans, plankton, etc.) and micro (bacteria) ecology that exists. It's an incredible display of biodiversity. As I have mentioned, the jetty is a dynamic environment. There are (many) days when it's just not worth going, and occasionally others when it's hard not to catch fish.

What to know before you go

If I could only pick three conditions to know before I hit the jetty, they would be water clarity, tidal phase and wind speed. Using those three variables, a fly fisherman can work out everything else they need to know without even stepping foot on the rocks. Clean - but not super clear - water, a falling tide, and moderate winds / waves (0-10mph, 0-2ft waves) are usually the best conditions to look for.

The greatest physical danger on the jetty is the jetty itself. Most jetties are not built for human comfort. They're usually a jumble of boulders or slabs of granite that invite missteps and twisted ankles. In addition to that, even the friendliest jetties have slick algae growing where the water washes over the rock. During winter this is especially bad, and puddles of water on the jetty often harbor a black algae that is particularly slippery. Many a jetty-goer, including the author, has discovered this the hard way.

The Packery Jetties are without a doubt the easiest jetties on the Texas coast to access, and are a good introduction to navigating the challenging environment out there. Just make sure you look back before every single back cast.

Directly after personal safety is knowing how to manage your line. I recommend a casting basket for everyone who goes out on the rocks; if you don't have one, obsessively check your line as you strip and cast to make sure it doesn't fall between the rocks and get hung up. It's very easy to break a fly line when this happens.



Port Aransas Jetty

What's out there

For the purposes of this article, I split the fish species that a fly fisherman might target on the jetty into two subcategories, Small Game and Big Game. Small game includes anything that might reasonably be caught on a 5 or 6 weight. This includes, but is not limited to: speckled trout, redfish, sheepshead, ladyfish (skipjack), Spanish mackerel, bluefish, fat snook, flounder, mangrove snapper, pompano and black drum. There are also random catches, like leatherjackets, Atlantic bumper, ribbonfish and lookdowns.

Big Game is anything that should only be targeted with an 8 weight and above, such as bull redfish, king mackerel, common snook, tarpon and jack crevalle. I'll gloss over these for now, but if there's enough interest I will be happy to write a follow-up article. Most beginner jetty fly fishers don't have the tackle or experience to take on the bigger jetty denizens. This is due to the delicate nature of landing large fish in the wash zone while keeping both the fish and yourself safe from injury. Having a buddy to help out is extremely helpful in these scenarios.

How to catch them

The jetty is broken up into subsections, niches where the fly angler is more likely to encounter one kind of fish over another. In the trough directly along the rocks near where the jetty meets the beach, you are likely to find speckled trout, redfish, snook, flounder, mangrove snapper, sheepshead and ladyfish. As you move farther out, the specks fade out a bit and are replaced by Spanish mackerel, leatherjackets and atlantic bumper. If you're a newcomer to the jetty and you're fishing a long line of rocks like the Port Aransas Jetty or even Mansfield, I recommend focusing on the first third of the jetty on the surf side (opposite from the channel). Shorter jetties like Packery, Fish Pass or the rock groins along the Galveston seafront are not long enough to change much over their length, so they don't require different rules.

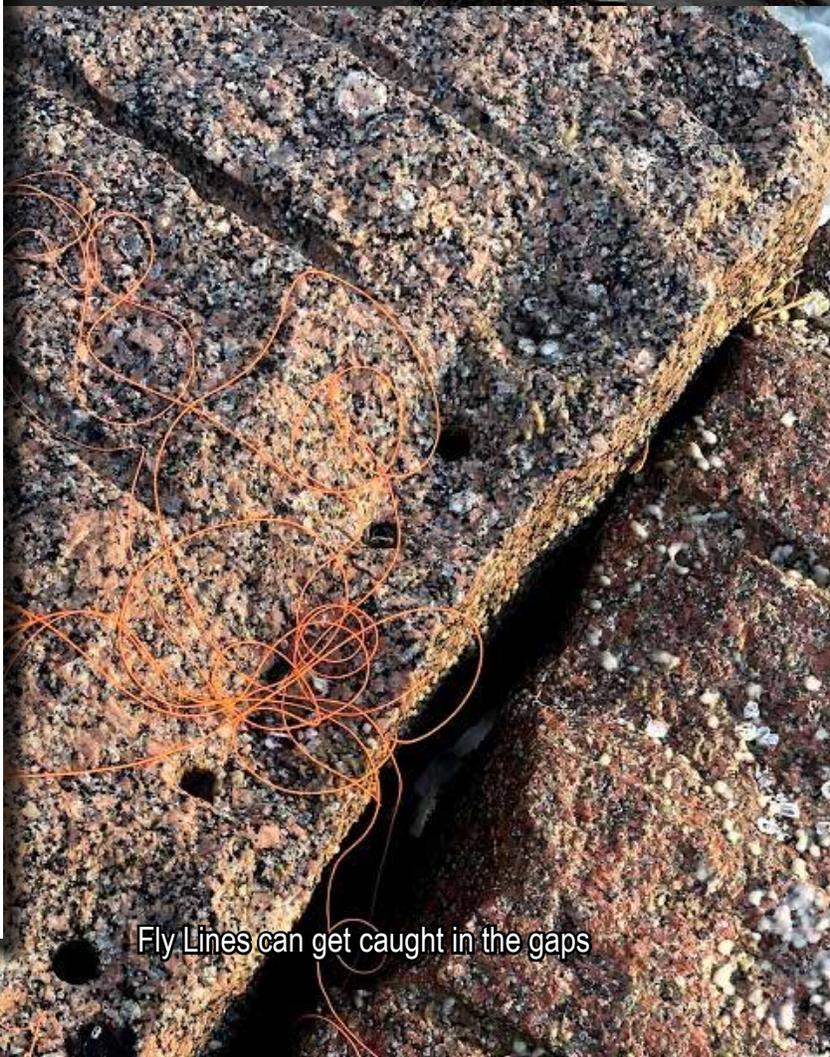
By focusing on the area near the beach, you'll be able to more effectively target fish - there simply isn't as much water for them to be in. If you're fishing the channel side in Port Aransas, you could be tossing a fly into 60 feet of water - the odds of a fish even seeing your fly are much lower. Also, by focusing near the rocks you're covering the most obvious cover around, which is the jetty itself and the trough in the sand made by tides and wave action. On a summer evening where the setting sun coincides with a falling tide, this zone will be thick with ladyfish, speckled trout and even snook.

After years of fishing the jetty, I narrowed my fly selection down to a few go-tos. It's hard to beat a clouser - size 1 blue/white and chartreuse/white are my favorites in various weights - and small blue/white deceivers are great too. Crease flies up to 5/0 will draw strikes from specks and ladyfish when the light is low, and slowly fishing heavy shrimp-ish flies deep after the morning bite has slowed can catch reds and even a surprise sheepshead now and then. Surf candies or similar flashy baitfish patterns work well for toothy hunters like Spanish macks and ladyfish.

Experiment with retrieves. If you're trying to catch Spanish mackerel or ladyfish, there is no such thing as 'too fast.' Two-handed retrieves can help spark reaction strikes when the usual single hand strip isn't



Packery Channel Jetty



Fly Lines can get caught in the gaps

working. During low light or turbid conditions, I try to make the fly move in a steady, predictable manner to help the fish find and track it. Rattles are great, but make sure to find metal or plastic ones, the glass ones won't last.

Speaking of teeth, let's discuss leaders and tippet.

When targeting Spanish mackerel, there are two schools of thought. If you have a very good two-handed strip and can move the fly very quickly, you don't have to use as heavy a bit tippet - say 20 or 25 pound - than if you're stripping the fly quickly, but with the usual single hand technique. The stop-and-go movement of the single hand strip allows the mackerel to over-run the fly and snap their teeth down on your leader. A bite tippet of 40 pound mono is sufficient to keep them from cutting you off most of the time.

When specifically targeting ladyfish, I would recommend going with at least 20lb tippet to help keep from getting cut off. Ladyfish don't have the razor sharp teeth that the mackerel do, but their mouth is rough enough to cut through light line within a couple jumps.

The rule of thumb for me is to never have a leader stronger than my fly line. I assume my fly line will break at around 30 pounds of pressure, which means I choose 20-25 pound test for the weakest point of my leader. There are many days where a straight piece of 20 pound is sufficient, but when the wind kicks up I will tie on a 7-8 foot tapered leader, stepping down from 50 to 30 to 20 pound test. In calm and clear conditions, I will lengthen my leader sometimes as long as 12 to 15 feet, with a tippet of 12 pound fluorocarbon to help my fly get down in the strike zone. I generally use monofilament on the jetty, since it's cheaper and I tend to go through a lot of leaders, but I will switch to fluoro when I feel that the fish are deeper and I need to get down as quickly as possible.

Our Texas jetties offer unique challenges and rewards for fly fishers, no doubt about it. With a little preparation and a little luck, you could hit the timing just right and have some of the best fishing of your life.

If you have any more questions about jetty fishing, feel free to reach out to my Instagram account [@elevateflycasting](https://www.instagram.com/elevateflycasting) and we can chat.

Equipment list for Small Game -

- 5-8 weight rod
- Reel loaded with at least 100 yards of Dacron backing and a weight forward, tropical floating line
- An extra fly line if possible
- Extra leader / tippet
- At least a half-dozen flies for every hour you plan on being out
- Polarizing sunglasses
- Sun protection
- Water / snack
- Pliers
- Casting basket
- Sturdy, jetty-appropriate footwear
- Backpack, fanny pack or sling pack of your choice.
- Optional: Stringer, 5 gallon bucket, long-handle landing net.



Doug Fishing the Surf-Side



Fly Fishing at Sunset

The Fly Tyer's Corner by Jim Gray (AFF NL August, 2020)

Llano Fox

Like most fly fishers, I love catching bass on top water flies, but sometimes that just doesn't work. When the bass won't take my Llanolope, I switch over to my favorite sub surface fly - the Llano Fox. The Llano Fox is a foxy clouser variation, tied with chartreuse and white fox tail, and grizzly chartreuse legs. This combination of size, color and silhouette mimics a drowned grasshopper. During the summer, grasshoppers are a staple food for many species of fish on the Llano. On a recent trip, I used a Llano Fox to catch a freshwater drum, a carp, many guads, largemouth, red breasts and greenies, all from the same pool. I'm convinced that fish were keying on hoppers, and slowly dragging a Llano Fox through

the pool was irresistible. I've had similar success on other Hill Country creeks and rivers. The Llano Fox has become my "fly of last resort". I know if I can't catch fish on this fly, it's time to go home.

Materials

Hook - Gamakatsu B10S size 6

Thread - UTC 140 Chartreuse

Eyes - small double pupil lead eyes, chartreuse or yellow

Under Belly - white fox tail *

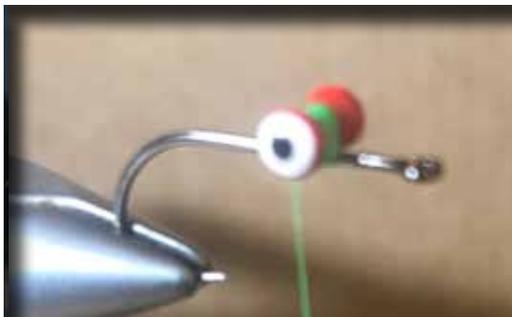
Flash - pearl crystal flash

Legs - Hareline grizzly micro legs fl chartreuse

Wing - chartreuse fox tail *

* finn raccoon can be substituted for fox tail

Step 1: Secure the dumbbell eye 1/8 inch behind the hook eye, using figure 8 wraps. Secure the wraps with a drop of Krazy Glue.



Step 2: After removing all the under fur and stacking to even the tips, tie in a sparse amount of white fox tail in front of, and behind the eye.



Step 3: Flip over and tie in 2 strands of flash. Loop each strand around eyes to make 4 strands of flash, and secure with thread. Trim flash to be even with the tips of the fox tail under belly



Step 4: Cut a single strand of grizzly micro leg in half. Loop the 1/2 strand around each eye and secure with thread. This technique secures the legs and allows them to move freely when fished.



Step 5: Remove the under fur from a sparse amount of chartreuse fox tail. Stack to even the tips and tie in just in front of the eyes. The tips of the chartreuse fox tail should be the same length as the white



Step 6: Secure the head wraps with Krazy Glue. As with any fly you tie for fishing the Llano or San Gabriel, you can create variations of this fly with bead-chain eyes, different colors, or smaller hooks.



Fish and Wildlife are Safer at Local County Park, Church Camp, and Army Base by Morgan Jones, Eagle Scout

Working together with the other members BSA Troop 1, First Presbyterian Church, Austin, TX, we have helped protect wildlife from improperly discarded fishing line. Improperly discarded fishing line (sometimes with hooks left on it) is hazardous to fish and wildlife because they often get tangled in it. To make matters worse, fishing line should never be thrown in the trash or put in conventional recycling bins because it is constructed of unique polymers that do not decompose. It must be sent to special recycling centers (like the Berkley Line Company) that melt it down and repurpose it into tackle boxes and toys.

The purpose of this project was to educate fishermen on the environmental hazards of improperly disposed of fishing line and to promote its proper recycling and repurposing. To accomplish this, we installed three receptacles made of PVC pipes at both Barkley Meadows County Park and Camp Mabry's two ponds; and one at John Knox Ranch's waterfront. In all, we installed a total of seven Fishing Line Recycling Receptacles and three Educational Signs that inform the public on how to recycle fishing line responsibly. To accomplish all of this, it took me and Troop 1 over 100 service hours.

As an advocate for the environment, I was very happy to have helped make this positive contribution to our community. In recognition of my conservation efforts, I am pursuing the BSA Hornaday Conservation Award which has been called: "an Olympic medal from the earth."

Why Fishing Line Must be Recycled Differently

Brief History of Monofilament Line

- The DuPont Company invented Nylon in the 1930s and developed monofilament fishing line in the 1950s. One of the main polymers in monofilament fishing line is Nylon.
- DuPont first introduced Stren fishing line in 1959.
- The Berkley Fishing Line Co. was one of the early pioneers in developing monofilament line and today is one of the major recyclers of used monofilament line.



Why We Need Monofilament Recycling Receptacles

- Animals often get caught in improperly disposed of fishing line.
- Fishing line is not biodegradable and can take up to 600 years to degrade.
- Improperly disposed of fishing line ends up in landfills where birds get tangled in it.
- Fishing line cannot be disposed of like other recyclables because it is made up of unique plastic resins and polymers—it must be melted down. Fishing line must be cleaned of hooks, leaders, and weights, before it is recycled.
- Animals sometimes eat fishing line, which is toxic.
- Fishing line gets caught in fish gills and boat props.

What you can put into the Fishing Line Receptacles?

- ONLY FISHING LINE!**
- When clearing out the receptacles we often find other waste that was improperly put into the receptacle.

What happens to fishing line after it is recycled?

- After the fishing line is emptied from the receptacle it is sent to special recyclers who melt it down and make other plastic products such as tackle boxes, spools, fish habitats, and toys.

Where Can I Send Old Fishing Line?

- Texas Mono Recovery and Recycling Program (MRRP) at texasmono.org, or call: 979-864-1558
- Berkley Line Company: 1900 18th Street, Springlake, Iowa 51360



This receptacle was installed by Troop 1, Austin, TX as part of a BSA Hornaday Award Conservation Project.



Morgan Jones



Installation

AFF Outings by Juan Shepperd

Hey Everybody, I hope this August 2020 Outings update finds all of you cool (not so easy this time of year, I know) and safe! I've managed to do a little fishing lately. Family vacation to Colorado in July where I caught some nice wild Browns on the upper Colorado River. I also fished the Texas Coast last weekend. The fish are biting. I fished the Port Aransas harbor with my son, his friend, and his friends' dad. We fished early and late, avoiding the hottest part of the day. The kids caught a lot of fish. My 9 year old son caught his biggest redfish so far. He was super-excited. I was pretty excited too. It was nice to slow down and chat with family and friends while fishing. It reminds me that some of the best moments in fishing aren't catching fish necessarily, but the conversation and connections you make. Hope all of you have managed to get out too.

Those of you strictly seeking fish (I am with you-in-spirit often), there are some BIG fish in the gulf. The week before my trip, Port Aransas hosted the Texas Legends Billfish Tournament, with the winner hauling in a 737-lb blue marlin. You can see a picture of it online in the Port Aransas South Jetty. Nice to do some saltwater fishing. I will try to help organize 1-2 trips next year.

In August, those of you seeking to get outside, lets try a half day close to home. The Saturday after our virtual Club meeting 8/20, lets fish the Cemetery Wade on Brushy Creek on 8/22/2020. I know it's hard to find a place that's cool in August. I like to fish the San Marcos River, usually, at this time of year because I find that natural spring water refreshing. I want to try something new this month. Thanks to Scott Kerrigan for reviewing Aaron Reed's new book Fly Fishing Austin and Central Texas recently, and for having him join a club meeting. I picked up a copy. Because I want to try new water, and because this wade trip is close (30-min drive from downtown Austin) and requires no boat, I picked The Cemetery Wade on p. 173. For those you that don't have the book, the GPS coordinates for CR137 in Hutto are 30.506854, -97.548799. For those of you interested in fishing a few hours, lets meet at 9 am on Saturday 8/22/2020 at CR137.

Several of you will make it to South Padre Island in September. I won't make it this year but I look forward to your fishing reports. Fall is a great time to visit and fish.

The trip I organized to Chama, New Mexico happens Oct 1 - Oct 5. Our cabin is full but if you are interested and don't mind staying in separate accommodations, let me know. I can give you details on other places to stay. The outfitter can accommodate more people and Colorado and New Mexico offer great fishing. October also brings Oktoberfisch 2020 hosted by the Fredericksburg Fly Fishers from October 16-18. It's always a lot of fun. I've attended it when it was on the Llano River. This year's event is on the Pedernales River. See <https://www.fredericksburgflyfishers.com/oktoberfisch> for registration and details

In November, I am going to fly fish the Lower Mountain Fork River in Broken Bow, Oklahoma. I've rented a cabin for me and my family. I will be there Nov 5 - 8, 2020. The Texas Women Fly Fishers will be there that same weekend. That is a skilled and experienced fly fishing group. I've been once with a buddy and we had a ball. We caught some big trout. We didn't know what we were doing, and the fish cooperated. It's been several years since I was there and I was there pre-floods, so I doubt my beginner's luck will carryover. I am looking forward to going back to this area and gaining insight from TWFF. Compared to New Mexico, Oklahoma is an easy drive. There is a campground and plenty of log homes and other lodging available. If interested, let me know and I can help you. Chris Johnson at Living Waters guided here for some time and he is a great resource too. The Club has talked about going to Broken Bow for years. I understand Covid has disrupted travel plans. If you are comfortable traveling that a few hours North of Dallas, you won't be disappointed in the fishing.

If you haven't fished this year, I encourage you to get out and enjoy the water. Be safe and responsible. If you can stand the heat, I think you'll be reminded a couple of hours on the water does a body good.

Last, if you want to join the AFF Outing Group on GroupMe, send me a note, text, something with your name and cell phone, and I'll add you to the group.

In the meantime, Stay safe and hope to see you soon!

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

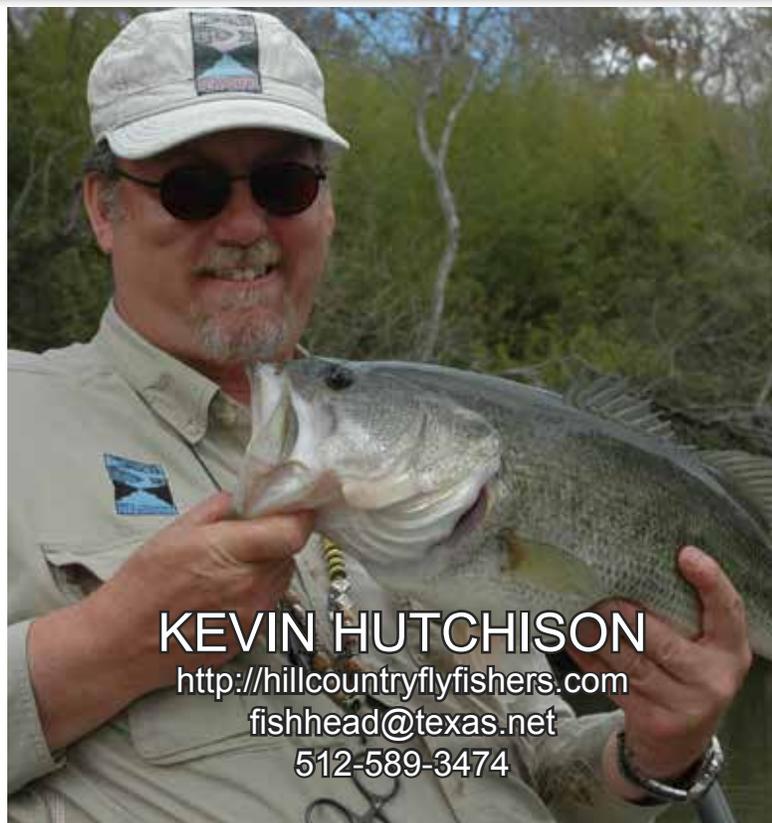
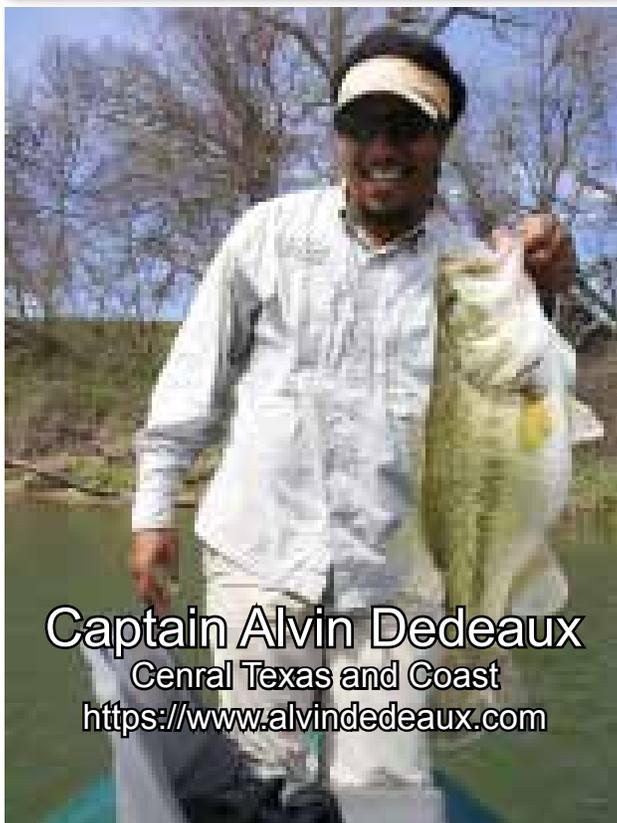
Nick Streit – <https://taosflyshop.com/flyguide/main> New Mexico and Southern Colorado

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

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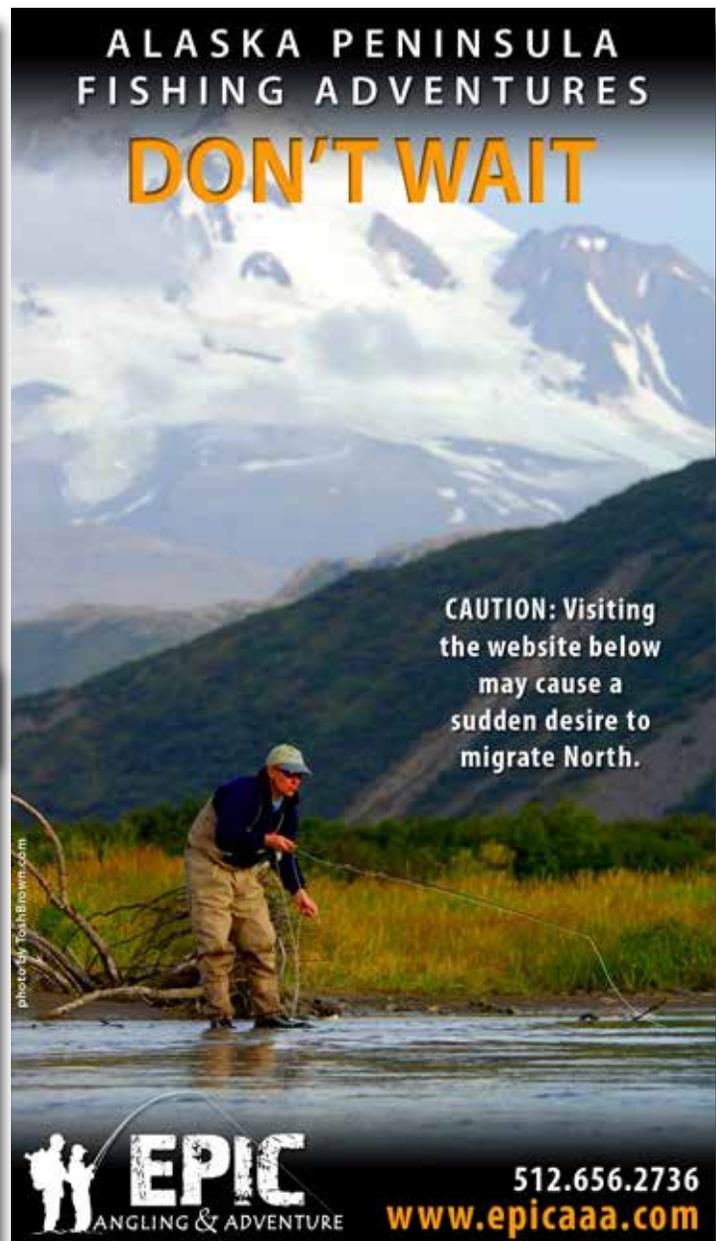
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