



## **SALTY BYTES**

The quarterly newsletter of the Saltwater Fly Anglers of Delaware

**Feb., Mar., April 2018**  
**Writer/Editor: Roy Miller**

On the internet at [sfaod@outlook.com](mailto:sfaod@outlook.com).; our club message board is at [www.TidalFish.com](http://www.TidalFish.com)

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### **-A Note from the Editor-**

As always, contributions of articles, comments, or pictures that I can include in subsequent newsletters are welcome. You can reach me at home (see above) or by email.

### **Club Happenings**

**Feb. 14** – Regular Club meeting 7 PM Rolling Meadows Club House, Lewes  
**Feb. 24-25** – Lefty's Tie Fest, Annapolis, MD  
**Mar. 10** – Delaware Outdoor Expo, Harrington, DE  
**Mar. 14** – Regular Club meeting  
**Apr. 11** – Regular Club meeting  
**Apr. 27-29** – Delmarva Outdoor Expo, Harrington  
**Apr. 28** – White Clay Fly Fishers outing on White Clay Creek

**May 12** – Club picnic with the White Clay Fly Fishers at Cape Henlopen Park

**June 13** – Regular Club meeting with grand raffle drawing

**July 11** – Outdoor fly casting venue with burgers and dogs at Rolling Meadows parking lot

**Aug. 8** – Regular Club meeting

**Sep. 12** – Regular Club meeting

### **SFAOD Meeting 2/14/2108**

President Rakes convened the meeting at 7:05 PM. Turnout was somewhat light tonight because of Valentines Day. John filled in for Ron Smith who was absent. There was \$4,465 in our treasury as of January 1, 2018. Tonight there is \$4032 currently in our treasury after expenses for the meeting room and show costs. Lefty's Tie Fest is scheduled for Feb. 24-25 in Annapolis, MD at Lowes Annapolis Hotel. Admission is \$10/day or \$15 for both. Other calendar items include March 10 at the Delaware Sportsmen's Expo at the Harrington State Fair grounds. Our next meeting is Wed. Mar. 14. Lurefest in Bowers Beach is scheduled for April 7. On April 27-29 there will be a Delmarva Outdoors Expo, also at the Harrington Fair Grounds. On Saturday May 12 we host the White Clay Fly Fishers at Cape Henlopen Park Pavilion. Frank has the tickets tonight for our Grand Raffle to be held at our June meeting. Bernie Stasko is selling flies donated by Club members. Freshwater flies are \$5 for a box. Frank has Club hats, shirts, and Club books on where to fly fish in Delaware. Paul Temple put our sponsors on hot links on our website. Also there are other links like Delaware Ponds, and other website links like knots, etc. Don't forget the Lancaster Fly Fishing Show on March 3-4.

**Fishing Reports** – Rich King says there are some striped bass in Canary Creek. Ethan and Shawn Rakes went to Millsboro Pond and hooked a few pickerel. Paul Temple has caught some bluegill. That was about it for fishing reports. Chad Betts and Cohen are new members and Cohen's picture is on the new Division of Fish and Wildlife fishing guide. Jim Diekenado is a guest tonight and lives in Magnolia. The Orvis Outlet recommended he attend. He is relatively new to fly fishing. Lefty Kreh tied flies are being sold on Etsy by his family.

Our speaker that evening was Paul Dolbec. Paul taught at LL Bean's Atlantic Salmon school and is a certified fly casting instructor who is originally from Maine, but now lives near Magnolia, DE. He talked to us about fly fishing for Atlantic salmon. Atlantic salmon spend at least 40% of their life in the salt, and since they are anadromous species, they only return to freshwaters for spawning purposes. There are three gene pools for Atlantic salmon: the Baltic Sea, Europe, and North America. The Penobscot River in ME is staging a comeback, but the species is still listed as Endangered in the U.S. Rod fees for salmon fishing can run from \$80-\$120/day in Gaspé, Quebec to \$12,000-\$15,000 on the Kola Peninsula in Russia. Iceland and some Scandinavian countries can cost as much. Paul prefers using 2-handed rods when he is wade fishing. On lower water he prefers smaller flies, and on cloudy days he suggests using dark flies. There is no use in fishing early in the day and he prefers fishing the evening hours. On his 11-15 ft. rods he uses 8-10 weight lines, either Scandi or Skagit in 470-650 grains. A traditional Spey 8 wt. rod will cast a line of 530 grains. On one-handed rods, an 8 wt. will load with a 218 grain line. He uses a turle knot on turned down or up eye hooks. On the Miramachi River he prefers black and green flies. Some days he will start with a blue charm fly and also end the day using one. He said that the shady lady is a great salmon fly. In the spring when fishing for kelts, he likes to use streamers that look like smelt. Paul says that salmon will take the fly, but not really for the purpose of eating it since they do not feed on their spawning runs. For salmon equipment try Tight Lines Fly Shop in Parsippany, NJ or Stone River Outfitters in Bedford, NH. For books on salmon flies, he likes Paul Jorgenson's Salmon Flies. Paul's email address is: [pdolbec@icloud.com](mailto:pdolbec@icloud.com).

### **SFAOD Meeting 3/14/2018**

Club President, Shawn Rakes, called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM at the Rolling Meadows Club House. We all had a few moments of silence to commemorate the passing of the legendary fly fishing pioneer, Lefty Kreh. Our speaker that evening was Ethan Rakes, the son of Club President Shawn Rakes. Ethan won the Youth Division of our 2017 "A Good Year" fly fishing contest. This contest awards prizes at the end of the year for those who

landed the most species of fish taken on a fly. For Ethan's program he recounted all of his 17 entries in the contest and he had the pictures to prove it. Notable captures included a snook in Puerto Rico and a Chinook or king salmon on the Pulaski River in NY. Everyone enjoyed Ethan's presentation and he is now the youngest of our monthly invited speakers.

A business meeting followed Ethan's program. It was noted that there will be a lunar high tide event on May 15 at Cape Henlopen. The lunar high tide yielded some nice catches last year for Ed Barry and Bill Licata. Ed Barry passed out some tide charts for everyone. He recommended that the Club members tailgate at the Cape Henlopen Pier parking lot on one or more of these lunar high tide events. Ed has raffle tickets to sell for the June Grand Raffle. Bob Kutay said that we had 140 paid members at the end of 2017, plus 24 honorary members. The end of this month is the deadline for membership renewal. Among new members and guests Jim Didonato and his friend Ron Edge were introduced as was Jack Detweiler. Jason Gillespy was introduced by Roy Miller. Jason just moved here from South Carolina and is anxious to try some saltwater fly fishing, having done both freshwater fly fishing and conventional freshwater fishing. He also is starting a tile business here in the Milton area if anyone needs some tile work done at their houses. Treasurer Ron Smith said that we had \$4,032 at the end of the previous calendar year and \$4,538 at present. He passed out budget sheets for 2018. Even though he projects a slight deficit, he expects Club dues from new members to erase that deficit. Ron said that at the Delaware Sportsmen's Expo in Harrington on the 10<sup>th</sup> of this month we signed two new members and had a lot of interest. The Delmarva Expo will last 3 days from April 27-29, so we will need volunteers to man our table. We will be doing casting demonstrations and there will be a fly casting contest at the Expo. Our outing with the White Clay Fly Fishers on White Clay Creek in Landenberg, PA also is scheduled for Saturday of that same weekend. Frank Danner reported that he has the usual Club hats, shirts, and fishing tips books for sale. If you want to check out books or CDs from our Club library, let Steve Halstead know and he will bring your items to the next meeting.

**Fishing Reports** - Youth member Christian caught bluegills and redbreast sunfish from a pond while using a bumble bee fly. Ethan Rakes caught a largemouth bass on a fly (his first fish of the year), and also a bluegill and a black crappie. Jim took a pickerel in Concord Pond and Paul Temple also landed a pickerel on a fly. Rich King said that there still are reports of striped bass in Canary Creek, but you need a boat or kayak to get to them. Ed Barry fished on a charter out of Jupiter Inlet in FL. The captain specializes in fishing for spinner sharks and snook. He caught a snook, some jacks, and a lookdown, of all things. Mark Sampson told Ron that he had good luck at Cudjo Key on bonefish, but then they left the flats. Steve Halstead fished South Padre Island in Texas. He fished for a ½ day but had no luck. Loretta Smith caught a 4 lb. bass in the upper end of Red Mill Pond. Rich King reminded everyone that the bluefish started to hit last year on April 17.



A nice bone for Bob Palmer this spring off of Turks and Caicos.

## SFAOD Meeting 4/11/2018

President Rakes called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM at the Rolling Meadows Club House after a number of people came inside from fly casting on the side lot.

Board member reports were given with Bob Kutay leading off with membership. Bob reported that we now have 126 paid members, 25 honorary members and 32 previous members who have not paid yet for 2018. Ron Smith followed with the treasurer's report for March. We began the month with \$4,538 in the account and closed out the month with \$4,186. We had \$498 in deposits and \$830 spent for the month. Of the \$830 in expenditures, \$680 went to purchase 1,000 Club bumper stickers. We purchase the stickers once every 10 years to reduce the printing cost. Ron then gave a report on upcoming events. We will begin our Wednesday evening flats fishing outing at Henlopen State Park next Wednesday (4/18/18). We will have hot dogs on the tailgate as well as sodas and bottled water.

Our May meeting will be replaced by our annual picnic located at the Henlopen Pavilion on May 12<sup>th</sup>. This event will start at 12 noon. On the same date we will host the White Clay Club at the Henlopen fishing pier. We will meet the White Clay folks around 8:00 AM for coffee and donuts which we will provide. On April 27, 28 and 29<sup>th</sup> we will have a booth at the Delmarva Outdoor Expo. This event is held at the Harrington Fairgrounds, Fri. 5:00 to 9:00 pm, Sat. 9:00 am to 9:00 pm, and Sunday, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Also we will be doing a Fly Casting demo and offering fly casting instruction on Saturday. President Rakes then gave an update on the AGY contest. Frank Danner reported that he had club shirts, hats and Fishing Access booklets for sale. Bernie Stasko also reported that he had flies and bumper stickers to sell. Thanks was given to Mac McNaught for making it possible to have fly tying at Lewes Harbor Marina over the winter and a special thanks as well to owner Amanda Morris for allowing our Club to use the Marina for our Saturday fly tying sessions. There was no raffle at this month's meeting.



Saturday morning fly tying at Lewes Harbor Marina (file photo from a previous year)

Fishing reports were given and Ted Morlock reported on his trip to Roatan, Honduras where he was successful in taking a bonefish (see below). After the break Ron introduced the fly tiers for the evening program. The tiers were Bernie Stasko tying a Wooley Booger; Joe Schmoyer tying an epoxy shrimp; Rick Ranali demonstrating spun deer hair flies; Tim O Neil tying frog poppers; Ethan Rakes tying shad flies; and John Lupinetti tying a Clouser Minnow.



Here's Ted Morlock with his bonefish.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm. Many thanks to Ron Smith for compiling these notes at the April meeting.



Ric Ranalli and Joe Schmoyer manning the Club table at Lurefest on April 7 in Bowers Beach.  
Photo by Bob Kutay



## Biologists Corner

As fishermen we occasionally notice external parasites on our catches. We typically don't pay much attention to them unless these parasites are very common; especially if they are pervasive in the fish flesh we might want to eat, like

sometimes happens in large black drum which are known to carry spaghetti worm parasites in the musculature. We might notice 0.5-1 inch long white or red anchor worms attached to the head or bodies of our catches. These are actually parasitic copepods, a form of crustacean. In freshwater panfish and yellow perch you may have noticed black specks on the skin that resemble pepper. These are flatworm cysts caused by digenetic trematodes.

Earlier this spring an email notice to Club members was distributed from Daryl Pierce, a PA Fish and Boat Commission biologist from Bellefonte, PA. Daryl said that the US Fish and Wildlife Service has confirmed identification of leeches being observed by fishermen and fishery workers in American shad this year. We usually think of leeches as freshwater organisms, but this one is saltwater tolerant. Attached and below is an excerpt of information from Daryl that was included in one of Club email notices on April 25. I borrowed the lead photo for this column from the close up that accompanied Daryl's article.

According to Daryl, "American shad from the Delaware, Potomac, Susquehanna, and Nanticoke rivers have been found to have parasitic leeches inside their mouths on and their gills this spring. Some individual fish have had relatively high infestations of the leeches. The leeches have been identified as *Cystobranchus vividus* (previously known as *Calliobdella vivida*) and this identification was confirmed by a leech taxonomist at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. This leech is not host specific and is an estuarine species. They are known to occur on American shad in drainages throughout eastern North America and are also distributed in the Gulf of Mexico.

These leeches were reported in high numbers in the early 1970s on Atlantic menhaden and blueback herring. Fishermen reported them ending up on their gear and on the decks of their boats. While this event was described as an epizootic (indicating disease and harm to the fish), there is no information available on how the leeches themselves impact their host fish (apart from being a minor energy drain in instances when they are feeding). The leeches could certainly be a means secondary bacterial infections and it is possible that extremely heavy infestations could result in harm to the fish at least theoretically (but again, no data is available). While the leeches are tolerant to an extent of freshwater, they will ultimately die in these habitats. Moreover, the leeches that are being found infesting American shad will likely die anyway given that the breeding season is almost over. I suspect that the shad migration this year coincided with the leeches departing their hosts for mating season such that there were many leeches in the water column during the shad migration. The American shad accumulated this leech in the mouth and on their gills as they were migrating through the estuaries. Other factors such as low temperature and high turbidity have been referenced in instances where these leeches were particularly numerous."

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There are other external parasites that we are likely to see from time to time on fishes in our local estuarine waters. One that is commonly attached to the roofs of the mouth or in the gills of menhaden is the parasitic isopod crustacean *Olencirca praegustator*. I have seen a related species of isopod, *Lironeca ovalis*, inside the gills of other estuarine fishes like bluefish (see Gosner, K.L. 1979. A Field Guide to the Atlantic Seashore. Peterson Field Guide Series, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, MA for a description of these isopods). Both of these parasites get up to an inch long or longer, so they are quite noticeable when you are taking a bluefish off the hook. Fish parasitology is a science of its own with a long history of published literature. For those brave or curious enough to dip their toes into this field, I suggest an internet search or getting a hold of one of several texts or pamphlets that have been written on this topic, such as the following scholarly works which are not cheap. The following free website will get you started: <http://www.saltwater-aquarium-online-guide.com/fish-diseases-and-treatments>.

Hoffman, Glenn L. 1999. Parasites of North American Freshwater Fishes, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Comstock Publishing Assocs., Cornell Univ. Press, Ithaca, NY.

Sindermann, C.J. 1990. Principal diseases of marine fish and shellfish, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Cambridge Univ. Press.

rwm

## President's Report

Members,

It was a long tough winter with lots of wind and cold. I thought it would never end. Now spring is finally upon us, and as our little blue planet always shows us, the world does keep turning. As we plunge head-long into our local saltwater fishing season many members have already been catching fish. The big blues came through again, but not the bigger schools of fish we saw the last few years. There were some flounder, black drum, and stripers being caught as well. Many members reported having good days during the shad run in April with some really big 5-6 pound American shad caught. The shad chasers were fortunate to catch many incidental species while chasing the shad, always a nice bonus with that endeavor.

I have been reading the book Salt Water Fly Fishing by Joe Brooks first published in 1950. Member John McMinn loaned it to me to read on my trip to Belize in May. For those of you who have not read this book, but have familiarity with Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries, this masterfully simple book is a home-coming. Brooks talks about the Susquehanna, Bush, and other rivers I grew up fishing and how fly rods and techniques were first applied by him and his friends to salt and brackish waters there. The simple wisdom of the time and pragmatic approach of Joe and company was pioneering, if not downright trailblazing. Brooks' only limitation was the quality of his equipment. Certainly because of his influence we have the top tier equipment we have today. I need to get my own copy of this book so that I can highlight the parts I want to come back to and take notes in the margins. If you are wondering why Lefty wore tan-khaki pants and shirts so often you need to read his mentor's book because the answer is in there.

The harsh winter brought us some bad news also with the passing of a couple of titans in our sport. First, the passing of Lefty Kreh, the true spiritual father of our sport and most recently Norm Norlander inventor of the Norvise and Pacific Northwest fly fishing pioneer. Every day we lose more of our greatest generation. Imbedded in those folks are the institutional knowledge of our sport. For me it was sobering as I thought about all that wisdom leaving us. It reinforced in me the idea that we really must stay true to our mission of teaching and spreading the joy of our great sport to our younger generations so that we can retain as much of that wisdom and knowledge as possible.

For those of you who have been traveling abroad fishing and fishing locally I can't wait to hear the reports at the next meeting. Lastly, congratulations to Tim O'Neill, the new owner of Norvise! Norvise is a world class product and Tim is a world class gentleman. Congrats!!!

Fish Long and Prosper,

Shawn

## PHWFF

**Our local Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing liaison is Russell Martin 302-535-9896 and his email address is [rtlmartin1980@gmail.com](mailto:rtlmartin1980@gmail.com). Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing is a Club-sponsored program and all club members are invited to help with this exciting and rewarding program. Please join the group at one or more of the periodic programs at the Veterans Home in Milford. See Russell for more details on dates and times. You won't be sorry that you donated your time and talents to this very worthy cause.**

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The end picture of Shawn Rakes was taken by Austin Green.  
The lead picture of Bob Palmer fighting a bonefish was shot in Turks and Caicos.