



SALTY BYTES

The bi-monthly newsletter of the Saltwater Fly Anglers of Delaware

Winter 2016

Writer/Editor: Roy Miller

On the internet at sfaod@outlook.com; our club message board is at www.TidalFish.com

For club-related questions, inquiries and suggestions, here are the **Board of Directors'** contact numbers

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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 cell at 302-381-3760 or by email.

Recent Club Happenings

January 8, 2016

There was no Club meeting in January. Instead, we held our annual dinner on Friday evening Jan. 8 at the Lewes Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall. As usual, this popular affair included a good turn-out of members, spouses, and guests. After partaking in the good supper provided by our caterers Carol and Jerry Murphy, drawings were held for the many door prizes donated by members and our Club sponsors. Our program speaker that evening was Richard Julian of Cape Henlopen State Park. Richard is the head naturalist at the Park and his program on the Park and Power Point talk was enjoyed by all. The winners of the annual John Meaghre Fly Tying

Contest were recognized for their winning entries and prizes were distributed to the top three finishers. First place was Bernie Stasko, second was Joe Helby, and third was Rod Welch. Many thanks to Shawn Rakes and to Kyle Johnson for putting together the Power Point show that ran on the screen during the supper. This Power Point show was set to music by Kyle and included pictures of many of the entries catches submitted to Shawn as part of the “A Good Year” Club fishing contest. The idea behind the contest was to tabulate how many species each entrant caught on flies during the previous calendar year (2015). The winner for 2015 was Rich Seagraves with an amazing 37 species of fresh and saltwater fish taken on a fly. Rich pushed his total over the top with an end of the year fishing trip to FL where he tallied 11 species on the fly. Roy Miller came in second with 33 entries and Ted Morlock was third. The first three finishers all were awarded specially marked fleece jackets in Blue Hen blue and gold. This was the first year for this contest, and it was very popular among Club members. Many thanks to Shawn Rakes for conceiving of the idea and for keeping the running tally going through the year. The last recognition ceremony at the banquet was a re-cap of the first-ever chain pickerel fly fishing contest that the Club held in November of 2015. All of the teams caught pickerel and the team of Jake Powell and Eric Johnson (Team No Viagra Needed) came out on top.



A Good Year winners Rich Seagraves, (middle) Roy Miller (left), and Ted Morlock (right) and Tournament Director Shawn Rakes with first place trophy



Roger Hone's striped bass carving that Rich will keep for the year.



John Meaghre Fly Tying Contest winners for 2015 - Bernie Stasko (1st place) and Joe Helby (2nd place). Bob Kutay is holding Rod Welch's third place fly.

February 10, 2016

President Lupinetti convened the meeting of 48 attendees at 7:02 PM. We received some flies and a fly box from a gentleman in PA (Bob Robinson) who isn't able to fish anymore. New members introduced that evening by Bob Kutay included Hans Fine from Baltimore, MD and Ed Hayes from southeastern PA. Also joining was Charlie Desciolo from Brooklyn, NY joined tonight. Curt Spicer and wife Heidi were recognized that night even though they joined last fall. They live on Collins Pond. Ron Smith's grandson Nick Scarff also joined at this meeting.

Ron Smith offered announcements. He stated that we have \$4,247 in our Club treasury. He also noted that Tie Fest will be held on Feb. 20 from 10-4:00 in Stevensville, MD off Rte. 8 right before the Bay Bridge. Mar. 9 is our next meeting and Club member Ted Morelock will talk about fly fishing from FL to AK. Matt Heim of Assateague Coastal Trust will address our Club on the seismic testing that is to be done off of our ocean coastline. April 9 is Lurefest in Bowers Beach Fire Hall at 10:00. Admission is \$10 unless you buy a raffle ticket. Our Club will have a table at Lure Fest. Our April 13 meeting will also be a Swap Meet, so if you have some fishing-related treasures you are willing to part with, bring them that night and put a price to sell on them. The second Pickerel Team Challenge tournament event will be held on April 16th. On April 30 the White Clay Fly Fishers have invited us to visit with them on White Clay in Landenberg, PA. May 14 is our combined meeting and picnic at Cape Henlopen State Park with the White Clay folks, and will feature a covered dish lunch for all. On June 8 Kevin Josenhans will be our speaker at the regular Club meeting.

As usual Frank Danner has Club fishing guides for \$5, and Club hats and shirts for sale. Project Healing Waters held a fly tying session at the Milford Veterans facility last night. Help on PHW events is always welcome.

Shawn Rakes gave the announcement about the A Good Year fishing contest for 2015. There are two divisions this year, the wherever you catch it or Open Division and the Danner Division for local Delaware and eastern shore MD catches only. Jake Powell said that we have new Club flies for sale. Rick Ranalli announced that we will start fishing on Wednesdays in April or May depending on the weather. As in previous years, we will meet at the Cape Henlopen Park fishing pier parking lot at 6:00 PM or whenever you can make it. Tom McMahon has raffle tickets for the June 2016 grand raffle. Steve Halstead, our club librarian, suggested donating popular video titles to our list. Steve sent Shawn Rakes an updated list of all our videos Steve has converted from videotapes to DVDs. We will be updating our website to reflect that with Jake and Shawn's help.

It was noted that the Somerset Fly Fishing Show was held the last weekend in January and a number of Club members were in attendance. Several members went up on Friday and some stayed overnight. The Lancaster PA Fly Fishing Show is the first weekend in March. This is a smaller show than Somerset, but nonetheless worth attending.

Fishing Reports – Shawn has been catching pickerel and other freshwater fish so far this year. Dennis Lahiff said that yellow perch have started to school in the Nanticoke, and white perch

will soon follow. Transquaking Creek in MD has been hot for perch, sunnies, and gizzard shad. Lloyd Purcell caught a 29" carp of around 15 lbs. on a fly.

Our speaker that night was Club member Tim O'Neill of O'Neill's Irish Flies. Tim presented a Power Point talk about fly fishing for shad. He emphasized fishing locally for hickory shad, especially on the nearby MD waters like Deer Creek. Tim said that the best season is from April 15 until the end of May. You should look for water temperatures in the 55-72° F range with 60-65° F being optimum. He likes to use a Rio Outbound line with a short sinking head and 7.5 ft leaders tapered to 2X. Check his website for the latest on water levels of popular shad fishing spots. For flies he likes to include bubblegum pink with a blue bead. Black and chartreuse is his second choice. Unless it is overcast, the best fishing is first light and last light of the day. Overcast days can have good fishing all day.



Tim, John, and Frank at Tie Fest.
Ron Smith photo



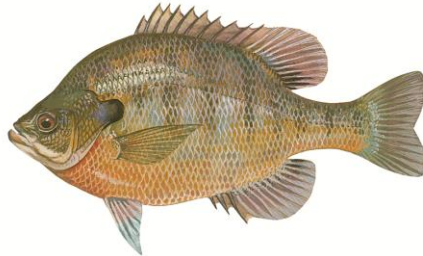
Tim Finley getting some casting instruction from the Master
Roy Miller photo



Speaking of Lefty, here he is again with Bob Popovics. How many
years of experience do these two represent? Photo by Ron Smith

March 9, 2016

The regular March Club meeting was held at the usual venue at Rolling Meadows Clubhouse in Lewes beginning shortly after 7:00 PM. In addition to the usual offers of Club hats, t-shirts, and Club fishing locations booklets, our speaker that evening was Club member Ted Morlock who spoke on his fly fishing trips from Florida to Alaska.



Biologist's Corner

Spring Time Panfishing

As I write this, spring time is due to arrive any day and a young man's fancy turns topanfishing? Really?? But then again, since I am no longer young, my thoughts do turn to panfishing at this time of year. Why is that you might ask? It is because there is great fishing to be had on our ponds and freshwater creeks before the inshore saltwater species show up. First to arrive on the spawning beds are black and white crappie. Since relatively few places, mostly in the upper half of the state, maintain a fishable population of white crappies, black crappies are available everywhere else in Delaware's freshwaters. Look for black crappie nests beginning in March in shallow areas and next to or even in cut-off stumps and other submerged woody cover. Crappie are not noted to be picky about eating flies, and nesting crappies are even less picky, so just about any soft-hackled submerged bead head nymph or wooley bugger will get their attention. I like to use flies in white or black, occasionally chartreuse or yellow, depending on water clarity and light conditions. Anything that simulates a crappie jig will work. These spawning fish can be quite dark in color, and they are really aggressive this time of year.

However, for pure fun, nothing can beat bedding bluegills. The males will begin to fan out shallow, bowl-shaped depressions in late April or early May and this nesting and fry rearing will continue into June. They like to nest in the company of other bluegills, so if you find one nesting depression, chances are there will be more nearby and they use the same general nesting areas year after year. When the males are on the nest guarding the eggs or trying to attract females, the fishing can almost be too easy. The males will strike just about anything that you put in front of them. For my money the most fun can be had with surface flies like poppers and rubber spiders. The big males will just suck them in and immediately turn their broad sides to you, thus putting an appreciable bend in your rod. To maximize your fun, consider using 3-5 wt. rods of 7.5-9 ft in length. Although the fight won't be long, for small fish they pull amazingly hard. The females will be lurking around the beds too, although typically they will be smaller than the males, although fat with eggs. A mature male bluegill on the nest will be almost coppery black in color and thick in the head area just above the eyes. Each nest will contain 15,000-58,000 eggs. If you are fishing for spawning fish, be sure to return the males to the water immediately before smaller sunfishes gobble up the eggs they were protecting. There are those who keep

these males for eating, but I don't recommend killing too many of the largest bluegills in a pond when they are most vulnerable to overharvest. If the largest bluegills are routinely harvested, the result will be a pond full of small, stunted bluegills. If you want some for a fish fry, consider keeping the medium size fish and return the largest breeders to pass their good genes on.

Pumpkinseed sunfish also nest in the spring, and sometimes they continue spawning for a few weeks after the bluegills have finished. Redear sunfish are spring spawners as well, but I don't usually catch redears unless I target them specifically. Redears like to eat mollusks like snails and freshwater clams, hence the nickname shellcracker. I have had luck on redears by suspending a sinking nymph below a popper or surface spider. When your spider disappears, set the hook as a redear may have your nymph. Once in a while you can take one on a surface fly, particularly when they are in shallow water for spawning purposes.

The other sunfish species are all spring spawners and nest builders as well. All exhibit similar behavior as the males dig and defend the nests. The redbreast sunfish exhibits this same type of behavior except in our freshwater coastal streams and rivers. All are great fun on light tackle and really help get us warmed up for the saltwater fly fishing season.

Here are a few pictures to get you fired up. On the left is the DE state record bluegill (2 lbs. 10 oz.) caught in 1998 by Arnold Harmon. On the right is the state record redear (3 lbs. 1 oz.), also caught in 1998 by Marty Messick. Both fish were taken from Diamond Pond near Milton, but not on flies. Fish this big will be as vulnerable as they are ever going to be during the spring nesting season, so have at it.



Photos by Roy Miller

rwm

Club Events for the rest of 2016

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Apr. 9 | Lure Fest, Bowers Beach Fire Hall |
| Apr. 13 | Club equipment swap meeting, |
| Apr. 16 | Club spring Pickerel Fly Fishing Derby |
| Apr. 30 | Fly fishing outing on White Clay Creek with White Clay Fly Fishers |

May 14	Combined meeting and picnic, Cape Henlopen State Park with White Clay Fly Fishers
June 8	Club meeting
July 13	Club meeting outdoors with casting demonstrations by Joe Cap.
Aug. 10	Club meeting.
Aug. 27	Club Croaker Fishing derby and covered dish. Registration at 0600 and check in at noon at the Rolling Meadows Club House where we will have lunch.
Sep. 14	Club meeting.
Oct. 2	Coast Day ?? This event has not been finalized yet.
Oct. 12	Club meeting.
Oct. 15	One Fly Contest, White Clay Fly Fishers invited
Nov. 9	Club meeting, Nomination of Board Members
Nov. 12	Fall pickerel fly fishing derby
Dec. 14	Club meeting. Roy Miller to speak on state/federal fisheries issues, slide talk on 2016 fishing trip. Election of Board members.

Although it is not our Club event, the Coastal Fly Rodders of Atlantic Highlands, NJ are holding a One Fly Tournament on Sat. May 14 that is open to our Club members to enter. Here is their announcement.

Register On-Site by bringing your fly and \$25 the day of the event to the tournament headquarters in the Gazebo at:

*Atlantic Highlands Municipal Harbor
2 Simon Lake Drive
Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716*

ALL PRE-REGISTERED ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY SATURDAY MAY 7TH

Pre-Register by sending your fly

*Coastal Flyrodders
PO Box 1402
Morristown, NJ 07982*

PHWFF

Our local Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing liaison is Frank Danner. 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 Frank for more details on dates and times. You won't be sorry that you donated your time and talents to this very worthy cause.

**“A Good Year” totals in terms of most species caught on flies as of March 31,
2016 by Club members in the Tournament**

Angler	Species	Open	Danner
Roy Miller	13	11	5
Bill Licata	12	12	1
Bernie Stasko	11	11	11
James Page	9	9	0
Rich Seagraves	9	9	9
John Lupinetti	6	6	6
Paul Temple	6	6	6
Bernie Dormer	5	5	5
Jake Powell	5	5	4
Ron Smith	5	5	0
Shawn Rakes	5	5	5
Kyle Johnson	5	5	5
Tom McMahon	5	5	5
Steve Halstead	4	4	0
Walt Clark	4	4	0
Ed Barry	4	4	0
Tim O'Neill	4	4	0
Ted Morlock	4	4	4
Jon Russell	3	3	0
Dave Johnson	3	3	3
Brandon Terry	3	3	2
Ed Hays	3	3	0
Loretta Smith	3	3	3
Jack Semotchko	2	2	2
Phil McDade	1	1	0

Many thanks to Tournament Chairman Shawn Rakes for compiling the above statistics and for suggesting this popular competition in the first place!

Occasionally life intrudes into our reverie and we are brought up short by tragic circumstances and illnesses. Such is the case with our good friend Joe Morris, who with his wife Amanda, is the owner of Lewes Harbor Marina where our Club has enjoyed many a Saturday morning between January and April 1 tying flies and eating doughnuts. As many know, Joe is fighting cancer and it has been a tough fight for he and Amanda. Our Club owes much to Joe and Amanda for allowing us to occupy their place of business on all of those cold winter mornings. Cancer fights are expensive affairs as most of us know, and like many of the self-employed, Joe and Amanda could use a little help paying medical bills. Our Club has already made a contribution, but if you feel inclined to do a little more, visit the website www.Gofundme.com/Joemorrislewes/donate. Thanks.

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- CAPT. CHUCK COOK OF FIRST LIGHT CHARTERS
- CHRIS ERBY OF DELAWARE PADDLE SPORTS

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- FLY ROD & REEL
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- WHITING FARMS, INC.
- WRIGHT & MCGILL, CO.

SALTWATER FLY ANGLER OF DELAWARE **2016 GRAND RAFFLE PRIZE LIST**

1. ORVIS, RECON/ACCESS 9WT. 9 FT. 4 PIECE, TIP FLEX FLY ROD and TUBE w/ ORVIS, ACCESS MID-ARBOR FLY REEL filled w/ 9WT. FLOATING LINE plus BACKING
2. ½ DAY FISHING TRIP with CAPT. CHARLES COOK of FIRST LIGHT CHARTERS-donated by CAPT. CHARLES COOK
3. ORVIS, CLEARWATER 9WT. 4 PIECE FLY ROD and TUBE
4. ORVIS, CLEARWATER LARGE ARBOR IV 7-9WT. FLY REEL
5. ORVIS, HYDROS ALUMINUM FISHING PLIERS
6. OASIS, "THE FLY FACTORY" FLY TYING BENCH
7. ORVIS, STRIPPING BASKET
8. BOOK-"THE FLY TIER'S BENCHSIDE REFERENCE" by TED LEESON and JIM SCHOLLMAYER donated by CAPT. FRANK DANNER
9. GUIDELINE EYEGEAR "EDDY" POLARIZED SUNGLASSES w/ MICROFIBER CLEANING CLOTH
10. FLY BOX with SELECTION of 24 SALTWATER FLIES tied and donated by BERNIE STASKO
11. \$50 ORVIS GIFT CERTIFICATE donated by FLY-ABOUT-SMITH
12. FLY FISHING MOTIF BLANKET made by CINDY LUPINETTI and donated by JOHN LUPINETTI
13. BOOK-"FLYFISHING SALTWATERS" by DON AVONDOLIO
14. ONE DOZEN SALTWATER FLIES
15. SALTWATER FLY ANGLERS of DELAWARE CLUB SHIRT
16. SALTWATER FLY ANGLERS of DELAWARE CLUB HAT

ALL PRIZES WILL BE DRAWN ON JUNE 8, 2016 AT THE SFAOD REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
AT 7 PM. TICKET HOLDERS NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN

TICKET DONATION: (one) TICKET FOR \$5, or (three) TICKETS for \$10
Mail Tickets and Check to: Bob Kutay 420 Circle Road Millsboro, DE. 19966



Do you think those big blues will pay us another visit this spring like last year? Go ahead, be an optimist. John Lupinetti will be ready.

Photo by Ron Smith

The opening picture is a winter sundown shot of Rehoboth Bay taken by Roy Miller