



SALTY BYTES

The quarterly newsletter of the Saltwater Fly Anglers of Delaware

Winter 2017

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 and e-mail addresses:

Ron Smith – (301) 213-7637 (Flyaboutsmitth@comcast.net)

John Lupinetti – (302) 381-1521 (lupi51@aol.com)

Shawn Rakes – (302) 381-1871 (flyfishrakes@gmail.com)

Frank Danner – (302) 359-2916 (capt.frankdanner@comcast.net)

Bob Kutay – (302) 260-2430 (boblinbeach@verizon.net)

Roy Miller – (302) 645-7103 (fishmaster70@comcast.net)

Jake Powell – (410) 310-9112 (jacobpowell65@yahoo.com)

-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

SFAOD Annual Holiday Dinner 1/6/2017

Our annual holiday dinner was held in the Fellowship Hall of the Lewes Presbyterian Church. Carol and Gerry Brown catered for us once again, and everyone agreed that the meal was good and there was lots to eat. Our program that evening was provided by Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Division of Fish and Wildlife Officer Oran White who told us about qualifications for his position and gave us examples of the type of work he does as a natural resources enforcement agent. After the program we raffled off door prizes contributed by the members and made announcements about fishing and fly tying contest winners and distributed prizes to winning participants pictured below. It was another fine evening and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Many thanks to Ron and Lorraine Smith for again serving as our hosts at Lewes Presbyterian.



The winners of the annual John Maghre Fly Tying Contest.
Left, Bernie Stasco, 2nd place; Bob Kutay, organizer;
Loretta Smith, 1st place, Bill Licata, 3rd place



Winners of the “A Good Year” fishing tournament, Open Division. From the left
Bernie Stasco, 3rd place; Shawn Rakes, tied for 1st; Bill Licata
2nd place, Roy Miller, tied for 1st.



Winners of the “A Good Year” fishing contest, Danner Division, from the left
Roy Miller, 3rd place, Dave Johnson and Tim O'Neill, 2nd place; Bernie Stasco, 1st place.



Winning team for the fall 2016 pickerel fly fishing tournament,
Roy Miller on the left, Loretta Smith on the right

SFAOD Meeting February 8, 2017

V.P. John Lupinetti opened the meeting for Shawn Rakes a little after 7 PM at the Rolling Meadows Club House in Lewes. Membership Chair Bob Kutay said we have 150 members of which 100 have paid so far. New member Joe Fetschen originally from PA stood up and introduced himself. Leon Thompson announced that even though he has been on our books as a member, he intends to become a more active participant. Leon has done a lot of bass fishing in his life. Ron Smith announced that we had a successful Holiday Dinner in January and that we currently have \$3,162 in our Club kitty. Our March meeting speaker will be Joe Lowentowsky. Ron reminded everyone of the March 11 Delaware Outdoor Expo at the Harrington Fairgrounds. Tie Fest on Kent Island, MD will be held on March 18 at the marina on Kent Narrows. Lurefest in Bowers Beach will be held on March 25. On April 28-30 there will be another outdoor expo at the Harrington Fairgrounds and we need volunteers to man a table. The expo will feature fishing, shooting, and retrievers. The hours at 4-9 PM Friday, 11-7 PM Saturday and 11-4 Sunday. Entry fees will be \$5/day or \$10/weekend. Regarding our Club emails, Jake Powell has volunteered to take over this job from Shawn Rakes. Frank Danner will take over the sales of Club tied flies for Jake since he is taking on the email chores. Flies are 2 for \$3 or 3 for \$5. As usual Frank Danner has Club shirts, hats, and books of local fishing locations for sale.

Fishing reports followed the business portion of the meeting. Bernie Stasko caught stocked rainbow trout at Tuckahoe State Park in MD. Bill Licata has sent pictures of bonefish and tarpon he has caught this month at Ambergris Caye off of Belize. Chris and Bernie have been taking sunfish in the Salisbury area. Loretta Smith caught a 4-5 lb. bass on a fly. It was announced that fly tying is continuing on Sat. mornings at Lewes Harbor Marina. Our "A Good Year" contest will be expanded this year to include a youth category.

Our speaker for this meeting was Ted Morlock who is a retired federal park ranger. Ted spent three weeks in FL in January and fished up and down the state. He managed to land 19 different species on flies while in FL, thus giving him a big lead in the Club fishing contest. He fished The Hammocks at Key Lime State Park, Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge, 7 Mile Bridge area, and further upstate. His slides made us all envious.

SFAOD Meeting 3-8-2017

President Shawn Rakes opened the meeting at 7:05 PM. Membership Chair Bob Kutay asked new member Robert Lesh from NJ to stand. Robert has been fly fishing for the last three years. Another new member, Jim Walpole, introduced himself. He lives at 5 Points near Lewes. Our Club total membership is 155 (47 are still unpaid) with eight new members in 2017 so far. Fred Campenaro was at the meeting after a long absence from the Club. Our treasurer, Ron Smith, said that we started the month of February with \$3,261, and ended the month with \$3,133. This Saturday we will have a table at the Del. Fairgrounds in Harrington for the Delaware Outdoors Expo. Frank Danner will present a fly casting demonstration at 10 AM. We can set up at noon on Friday or otherwise 8:00 on Sat. morning in the Dover Bldg. at the Fairgrounds. General admission is \$5. On March 18th Tiefest will be held at Kent Narrows Yacht Club. On March 25 is Lurefest at Bowers Beach Fire Hall. Next month at our regular meeting on April 12 our speaker will be Capt. Walt who fishes the Ches. Bay tributaries. Our Club picnic at Cape Henlopen on May 20 will constitute our May meeting. There is a three day show (the Delmarva Outdoor Expo) at the Harrington Fairgrounds on April 28, 29, and 30th, also \$5/day that represents all of Delmarva. Shawn says we are invited to join the White Clay Fly Fishers on April 22 at their annual outing on White Clay Creek in PA. Shawn said that April 8 is the day for our Club's spring pickerel fly fishing tournament. It will be held on a public pond to be named later.

The usual raffle was held after the business meeting. Frank Danner says that Project Healing Waters is getting ready to start a rod building class. The Veterans Home was without an Activity Director for the winter, and there is some doubt as to whether the new Activity Director considers our program a priority. Frank feels that we need to recruit some additional vets to our program.

Steve Halstead followed with a Club library report concerning our DVDs and books available for our members to borrow.

Fishing reports – Rich King says there are striped bass in the Broadkill R. and spawning size stripers in the Potomac River. Bernie Stasko caught a dozen yellow perch in Wyoming Millpond. Shawn was unable to give an update on the "A Good Year" fishing contest because he left the printouts at home. There are 3 divisions this year, including youth (16 and under), plus the Open Division and the Danner Division (Delmarva catches only). Ted Morelock's 12-year old caught a 4.5 lb bass on a fly, while Ted managed a 6 incher. Ethan Rakes caught a pickerel to add to his largemouth bass taken so far this year.

Our speaker was our own Bill Licata who shared some of his pictures of bonefish and tarpon that he landed last month in Belize during his now annual trip to Ambergris Caye, an island off of Belize reachable by shuttle flight or ferry from Belize City. Bill was there again for the month of February and in addition to taking two beautiful tarpon and a bunch of bonefish with a guide, he enjoyed good success just exploring the island on a golf cart and fishing backwater areas and ocean piers on his own for a variety of species: including bonefish, small snappers, and jacks. Belize has become the go to location for several of our Club members who want to try for a slam. The fish are there, two major airlines will take you to Belize City, and the fishing costs are reasonable. In addition there are world class snorkeling, good restaurants, beautiful tropical waters, and friendly people on Ambergris Caye. What's not to like?



The first two pictures are Bill Licata with two thirds of a Belize slam, a very nice tarpon on the left and a bonefish in the middle. The fish in the third picture is an Atlantic moonfish that Bill caught. Who knew that a moonfish would take a fly?



Here's Bill with a small roadside tarpon resulting from some do it yourself guiding.

3-11-2017

A number of our members attended the Delaware Outdoor Exposition on Saturday March 11 at the Delaware State Fairgrounds in Harrington. We had a table and backdrop set up which was visited by quite a few people who stopped to chat about fishing. A number who expressed an interest in joining took our brochure and promised to attend a future Club meeting. We gave demonstrations on fly tying and Frank Danner presented a fly casting demonstration. Attendance was good for this inaugural event.



The now famous Loretta Smith tying flies at the Delaware Outdoor Expo

Biologist's Corner

The Grand Slam



Now that baseball season is upon us, the term Grand Slam for a bases-clearing home run has come back into popular usage. Everyone who follows the game knows that it is one of the most exciting things that can happen in an otherwise sometimes tedious athletic contest. A no-hitter is sustained excitement of course, but only if it is your team's pitcher who is doing the good throwing. For the team and fans on the receiving end of the no-hitter, it is a boring game. However, a grand slam really gets the fans juiced up, if only for that one inning.

The baseball term has been borrowed by the recreational fishing industry to note unusual and memorable catches of multiple species in a day or on the same trip. The term probably was applied first to saltwater, particularly for fly fishing, although there is no reason why spin or bait casters could not celebrate the same achievement. In the saltwater fly fishing realm, a grand slam is the taking of a bonefish, permit, tarpon, and something else like a mutton snapper in the same day with a fly rod. The taking of at least two of these fish, arguably the permit and mutton snapper on the flats, are themselves causes for celebration because they are rare events. Taking the mini-slam of a bonefish, permit, and tarpon is even rarer and a cause for celebration. The downside is that we would have to do some serious traveling to exotic southern locales just to try for a grand slam, and then be extremely lucky in addition to being proficient with a fly rod, plus have a really good guide for the day.

Not to be out done, freshwater trout fishermen recognize a grand slam as the taking of a brook, brown, rainbow, and cutthroat trout on a fly, all in the same day. Although I haven't even come close to taking the southern flats grand slam of bonefish, permit, tarpon, and mutton snapper in the same day, I can claim the trout fishing grand slam while fishing, of all places, in streams in Western Maryland, in addition to accomplishing the grand slam in MT last summer. Yes, Maryland actually stocked some cutthroat trout into the North Branch of the Potomac a few years back. I recently read an article on celebrating the taking of the grand slam of cutthroat subspecies in one of several western states like Wyoming and Utah. This would be nearly impossible to do in one day, however, because of the geographical separation of these subspecies.

So why couldn't we have the local equivalent of a saltwater fly fishing grand slam? What would it consist of? Everyone might have a different opinion on this. How about the Henlopen Flats grand slam? Would it be a striped bass, bluefish, summer flounder, and a weakfish or croaker? Substitute speckled sea trout or red drum or hickory shad and you still have a major accomplishment. The inshore ocean slam could include bluefish, false albacore, Atlantic bonito, and striped bass. Or perhaps even further offshore you could include any shark species, mahi or dolphinfish, Spanish or king mackerel, and even a wahoo? Wow, now we are talking! What about white marlin, or bluefin or yellowfin tuna on a fly? It can be done, if you have the will, the financial resources, the right tackle, and a strong back.

If we target Delmarva Peninsula freshwaters only, you could catch a slam on Newton Pond: namely a regular rainbow trout, a golden rainbow trout, a largemouth bass, and a bluegill. I've managed to do that one before. How about a chain pickerel, black crappie, largemouth bass, and a bluegill on a Delaware pond in one day? Very doable. Throw in a good size carp or catfish just for excitement. American shad, hickory shad, blueback herring, and alewife or gizzard shad the same day? The shad slam, and why not? It can be done right here in southern Delaware. If you just concentrate on panfish, you certainly could catch a white perch, yellow perch, bluegill and a crappie in the same pond. If you focus on sunfish species alone, you could go for a bluegill, a redbreast sunfish or green sunfish, redear sunfish, and pumpkinseed sunfish, all in the same day.

You see what I mean? I invite you to celebrate the diversity of species we have available to us that are within casting range of a fly rod and see how many slams and grand slams you can accomplish this year. Plus, it will bump up your numbers in our Club's "A Good Year" fishing contest.



The elusive permit in fairly shallow water; underwater photo by Roy Miller taken off Belize

rwm

Tentative Dates for Club Events in 2017

- April 12** – Regular Club meeting at Rolling Meadows Club house in Lewes, Capt. Walt, speaker.
April 22 – Joint streamside luncheon hosted by White Clay Fly Fishers along White Clay Creek, Landenburg, PA.
April 28-30 – Delmarva Outdoor Expo, DE State Fairgrounds, Harrington.
May 20 – Club picnic at Cape Henlopen State Park. White Clay Fly Fishers are invited guests.
June 14 – Regular Club meeting at Rolling Meadows Club house.
July 12 – Outdoor meeting and casting demonstrations, Rolling Meadows Club house.
Aug. 9 – Regular Club meeting.
Sep. 13 – Regular Club meeting.
Oct. 11 – Regular Club meeting.
Oct. 14 – One Fly Contest.
Nov. 8 – Regular Club meeting and nominations for new Board of Directors.
Dec. 13 – Regular Club meeting, Roy Miller to give update on Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.
Final submission and judging of fly tying competition.
Dec. 15 – Close of 2017 "A Good Year" competition.

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 Danner 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 opening and ending photos were taken by Bill Licata on Ambergris Caye, Belize.