

ALAMO FLY FISHERS

NEWSLETTER

Issue XVII, No. 7

July 2002

Just One More Cast



By Clay Gill
President – Alamo Fly Fishers

The Alamo Fly Fishers extend our thanks and gratitude to the outgoing officers who worked tirelessly to bring meetings and outings together, along with the ever-important financial maintenance. A hearty salute to President-David Uhler, Treasurer-Ed Niehaus, and Outings Director-Bill Slough. Hats off to you and thanks for a job well done!

Now, a welcome to new officers Jay Forrest-Vice President, Treasurer-Todd Flemming and son Reese, his assistant. Also to the newly elected Outings Director-Jon King who will coordinate and organize the trips we take for the next year. Congratulations to these newly elected members who will certainly do a great job to make this organization fun and enlightening for all. Please contact them if you have any suggestions or special needs. We hope to make fishing and fly tying fun and exciting.

In the near future, members have requested we address the need for the club to fill in the gaps so to speak, to coin a phrase from Jay Forrest, to go back to the basics for new or less experienced members. In the spirit of this, we will try to have dual outings for the rest of the summer and one trip will be geared for skills and hands-on learning. The July 21st outing is the first time for this instructive approach with a group of instructors, Bruce Young, John Marfin, Jay Fuller, myself, and Buddy Robichaux, our Education Director leading the way. All types of skills from boating to knots, leaders to casting will be addressed. The informal sessions will be there on the riverbank at the Guadalupe State Park, down river from the swim beach. See the outing announcement in this newsletter for details of this and the following weeks float trip. The week following the Guadalupe will be on the San

Marcos River, but east of IH 35, away from the tubers and to the “secret spots”. The San Marcos club will host it. The date is Saturday, July 27th, and consist of a multi-mile drift lead by Joey Chavez and the Hill Country Fly Fishers. Kayaks or canoes are suitable. The skills session was originally in San Marcos, but moved to Guadalupe due to tubers in-town at San Marcos.

We have named the chairman for the Bud Priddy One Fly contest in May as Bruce Nelson, and the Christmas Party chairman will be John Marfin. John could not chair the One Fly because he usually wins this event with most fish! Buddy Robichaux will continue to lead the education process and coordinate casting and fly tying lessons by our club experts.

We now have a core of volunteers who will present skills before each meeting also. Jay Forrest will coordinate this and start off the next meeting with a unique approach to packing for a trip. Get there early to meetings if you need some help. Each meeting will try to cover something new and useful, including fly tying, knots and fly casting from a boat. Let Jay know if you have special requests. We are also looking for mentors at the skill trips. Bruce Young calls these perch-jerk cookouts. They will usually be held on Sunday to accommodate those who cannot attend the Saturday expeditions. These trips are tame and designed to be fun for kids and beginners to learn. Anyone who can grant access for members to private fishing waters, please contact Jon King or myself. We are in need of venues for this purpose.

Funds from the last Bud Priddy One Fly have been earmarked for additional stocking, and we thank Bruce Nelson for riding herd on this effort. We hope to put something back for Texas. Thank you so much Bruce for an excellent job. Doctor Priddy is very proud and smiling, I'm sure!

I spoke to Bill Childs at the Shonto Ranch in Kerrville recently, and we may soon have the skills outing and cookout at his ranch. We are shooting for August or September. Cattle operation will dictate which month we are invited to a multi-club get

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July Meeting (July 16)

Fishing Rhode Island and Massachusetts

**By Jay Forrest
Vice-President—Alamo Fly Fishers**

Interested in escaping the heat of August and September? Looking for a different saltwater experience. Rhode Island and Massachusetts offer a real change of pace at an attractive price. Big stripers, bluefish, and clear cold saltwater are the main attractions. A day or two with a guide will give you enough experience to explore on your own. And there are non-fishing activities to keep your non-fishing spouse happy.

Ken Brumbauh of Houston has fished Rhode Island and Massachusetts annually for five years. A former president of the Texas Fly Fishers in Houston, Ken will share insights on guides, equipment, flies, walk-in do-it-yourself sites, and when to go. (And early fall is great!)

Escape the heat and join us for some cool fishing! ■

Calendar of Events

July 21	--Guadalupe River State Park
July 27	--San Marcos River
August 2—4	--Land Cut at Jim Dodd's Place
September 28	--Red Fish Rodeo Roundup in Port O'Connor
October 25—27	--San Juan River or Upper Guadalupe
November	--No Outing
December 7	--AFF Christmas Party

July Outings

Guadalupe River State Park and San Marcos River

**By Clay Gill
President – Alamo Fly Fishers**

The July outings will be a skills day in the Guadalupe River State Park on the 21st, (Sunday) from 9:00 to mid-afternoon, just downriver from the swim beach on the riverbanks. This is not a float trip. The other expedition on Saturday the 27th will be a multi-mile float on the San Marcos River, east of IH 35 downriver to the HCFE take out spot. We will be hosted by the Hill Country Fly Fishers- (Joey Chavez-President), with the details to be announced at the July general meeting. Maps, directions, times and any special needs will be provided at the July meeting or contact the Outing or Education Directors.

The first trip is geared for all, and skill volunteers John Marfin and Bruce Young call this trip a “perch jerk picnic“. The mid-day skill sessions begin on all topics necessary for the beginner or the apprentice. Some kayaks will be available for tryouts. This is a chance for anyone intimidated by any aspect of fly-fishing to get friendly help and introduction. You will never meet a stranger here. Swimming is allowed and safety items required for children. Bring a picnic lunch and some tiny poppers for sunfish. Bass will hit most anything. Bring a friend or child who wants to learn to cast and get someone started in the great outdoors. This first skills session is informal and based on individual needs. More will come later.

Regarding the expeditionary float on the 27th of July, with the Hill Country Fly Fishers on the San Marcos River, we will bring the details of the trip with Joey Chavez and his group to the July general meeting. The San Marcos club is finalizing those plans at this time. It should be a great trip and a multi-mile canoe or kayak float. This will be a chance for many to learn some new water close by with great fishing. We will have the local experts to guide us on this one.

If inclement weather or high water cause a problem, these trips will be rescheduled. Verification through normal channels is recommended if in doubt.

■
Land Cut Trip Info. – See Page 4

Stalking Fish

By Jay Forrest

Vice President – Alamo Fly Fishers

I began hunting fish when I was 12 years old. My father had taken a new teaching job and we moved into a frame farmhouse out in the country – across the road from a beautiful, clear stream. If you sat on the cliffs 20 or 30 feet above the water you could see bottom down to about eight feet.

Of course, 12 year olds don't do much sitting so I spent lots of time watching fish dash for safety. I didn't fly fish, but I did save up my money and buy one of the very first ultra-light spinning rigs available. I got a couple of tiny wooden plugs from my grandfather's fly box and I was in business. I learned to sneak up on the pools and plop those tiny plugs in the riffles near the top of the pool where they wouldn't spook the fish and began catching fish "on the surface" instead of on worms like my friends.

I spent the next three years living on that creek and it changed my whole perspective. It was frustrating – but I learned to slow down. I actually learned to sit and watch fish occasionally and began spotting fish – particularly cruising bass – and casting specifically to them. My fishing personality was set.

I started fly fishing for trout when I was 20. While I generally couldn't see the fish, I knew where they should be and I fished to those spots – always with dry flies. It was almost like stalking. Eventually I learned to nymph – which will catch more fish – but I missed the hunt. I preferred fishing for trout on the surface where I could spot them. Eventually I teamed up with a couple of guides who like to sight-fish trout and learned to sight nymph when the water was clear – this was cool! And I began migrating to New Mexico and Colorado where the clear water made this kind of fishing more accessible. Older now, I learned to put on my waders and sit down and watch for a while rather than plunging into the water and spooking every fish in the pool with either my arrival or a wildly waving rod.

When I finally started fishing the flats about ten years ago it was love at first sight (of fish). Watching a swarm of 24 to 30 inch reds cruise up a shoreline,

waves cresting over their backs took my breath away. Seeing fish was difficult. Wind was often a nightmare. It took a lot of work and practice. But when the god's smile and a fish appears the result can be magical.

This past June I was on the flats with Ethan Wells. A lazy wake shows 150 yards away, heading toward us in a foot of water. Probably a redbfish, but too far to tell. We ease out into deeper water to be in position to intercept it and cast. At 150 feet it moves over grass and gleams like a copper penny. Nice fish, about 26 inches. At 65 feet it stops to root in the grass. Still gleaming like a copper penny. The water is so clear we can count the scales. It begins to move again. One cast. Not great. . . wind blew it a bit. Two feet left and one foot past the fish. It turns toward the fly when it lands but doesn't see it. One slow strip – about a foot. The fish pounces. The line goes tight. Yeah..... And the 12 year old that's still inside of me is very happy! ■

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acquainted visit to a most fascinating location. Bass and pan fish will be the targets. More info to come as it develops. Shonto Rainbows arrive in November, with Bass year-round.

The president of Austin Fly Fishers-Constance Whiston contacted me about a multi-club group in October to book Captain Billy Sandifer at Big Shell on Padre Island. See his web-site for more information. If a date and logistics can be worked out, this would be an additional trip for that month. We will inquire on interest in this event as it gets closer to work out logistics. A 4x4 vehicle is imperative. Contact Outings Director Jon King for developments.

We hope to make fishing fun and educational in the year to come, and encourage member participation in mentorship, as ambassadors to our great sport. Thanks to all who have already generously offered venues for us to fish such as member Tommy Howell and his ranch in Castroville. And thanks also those who quietly lend a hand behind the scenes. To assist in any way, or to relay any special requests or interest, please contact any club officer. The teamwork is certainly appreciated.

Also coming in October is the Texas Parks and Wildlife Expo in Austin, and we are looking for volunteers for tying and casting in our tent there on the grounds. There will be some goodies for the volunteers,

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TECHNICAL TYING LESSONS

By Clay Gill
President – Alamo Fly Fishers

The Alamo Fly Fishers had a large crowd for Chip Evans and the synthetic magic he spins from his tying vise. The group saw the Fathead Mullet constructed by video projection on a television. The fine art of Chip's technique and skills kept all in attendance riveted to the screen above him. The flies Chip ties truly swim out of the vise. This knockout pattern and many others he constructs were on display, including a unique invention by Chip--the "Baby Stingray". The informative instruction was punctuated by tales of the catch. Many of Chip's flies are now in the Pacific Tackle catalogue, for sale to tackle dealers worldwide. He also takes special orders for local favorites and redfish flies.

Chip and his Dad are new members and we hope to see more of his talents in lessons for the members at meetings and functions. We welcome them and all new members to our fishing society and encourage everyone to learn and grow together in a fellowship of mutual interest and concern.

Chip Evans can be contacted at 830-2174496. His boxed sets are geared for salt, and fresh water. Chip also ties excellent -size and color specific flies for applications like the Glades, Tarpon, Permit, Bonefish or Snook. Everything he has works well, and much or it is cutting edge. The day will come, I predict, that you will be glad to have some of his flies in your collector box. His fan list is growing daily as people see the unique and wonderful flies that emerge from his tying bench. Don't wait to try the Fathead Mullet. The saltwater varieties should bust this one well. It has the right profile to push water without the weight. This is a great combination. Being synthetic, it sheds all the water on the first back cast, allowing subtle placement for tailing fish. Trout will see a small version top-dog plug so popular early in the day.

We all say welcome aboard to the Evans team, and thanks for a super tying presentation. ■

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and this is coordinated by Constance Whiston who needs a list of participants to compile the schedule. Contact me if you can make this event. We will outline the Expo itinerary at the next meeting and it is also described in detail on the Internet in the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department web-site. It was a blast to see the kids smile last year as they conjured up their first fly. Casting lessons really create new monsters. Everyone loves it! I had one little guy start his Christmas list on my table after his first fly. The Expo is fun for all, and a superb message to our youth.

Our youth are the future of this sport, and become the leaders of tomorrow. Let us all strive often to help someone become acquainted with the fascinating aspects of fishing and the extreme importance of conserving our natural resources. Conservation must be the underlying theme in our endeavors.

Last but not least, -never forget our fantastic web-site, (alamoflyfishers.org), or its creator-Mike Richards, who works tirelessly to bring this newsletter to you in such style. Thank you so much Mike! Mike has requested any outing photos you can scan to him, or spare duplicates to him at the meetings. As they say, the picture is worth a thousand words.

Enjoy your summer, be safe, and use that safety equipment. As always, try to leave those places we visit better than we found them, and take a kid fishing. There is no better place to talk and get to know that special person. The memories will last a lifetime as we pass on a tradition.

Tight lines and much thanks for the life giving rain so badly overdue. We were about to be dragging our boats soon. ■

Sign-Up for Land Cut Trip

Our annual trip to the Land Cut on the Texas Coast will take place August 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. If you plan to attend, remember to sign-up and pay the cost of the trip at the July meeting. Since there is limited space in the cabin and on the dock, a limited number of members can take part in the trip. Members will sign-up for the trip on a first-come-first-serve basis. Information about what will be needed on the trip will be provided at the July meeting. If you have any questions call Bill Slough (210) 826-6697.



Damselflies

By Mike Richards

One of the insects which I see most often on the Hill Country rivers is the damselfly. Since there are so many damselflies in the air, there must be as many or more in the water in the form of nymphs. Both perch (sunfish) and bass readily feed on the damselflies and damselfly nymphs. Perch and bass will also readily take flies which imitate the damselfly and the damsel nymph.

When fishing with the damselfly adult imitation (dry fly), cast it gently on the surface of the water, and allow it to float, drag free, with the current or rest quietly in the still water. Causing the fly to twitch in certain situations may draw a fish's attention to the fly, and cause the fish to take the fly, but most of the time the twitch is unnecessary.

When fishing a damsel nymph imitation (wet fly), fish the fly as you would a streamer casting the fly across and down stream and retrieve the fly upstream into areas which you think may hold fish. If you are fishing in still or relatively still water, simply cast to areas which you think may hold fish. You may need to use a sinking line to get the nymph imitation near the bottom of the river where the fish are often located.

For photographs of damselfly and damsel nymph imitations, and for tying instructions; go to www.virtualflybox.com/pattern_list.shtml . ■

Fishing Port Aransas

By Mike Richards

Fishing at Port Aransas began early. Mike Copeland and Lyn Lennox fished the Fin and Feather Pier Friday night (June 21). The water was murky, but Lyn was able to catch a few trout.

On Saturday morning, Todd Fleming was on the water in his kayak before sunup, fishing the Brown and Root Flats. Bill Slough, Mike Copeland, Lyn Lennox and Jon King also fished Brown and Root Flats slightly later in the morning. Clay Gill and Ray Jung fished the Port Aransas area, but I don't know exactly where.

The wind was down – about 5 to 10 miles per hour. The water was very clear. The tide was a little higher than desirable.

Many red fish were seen in the clear water moving across the flats, but only a few would take a fly.

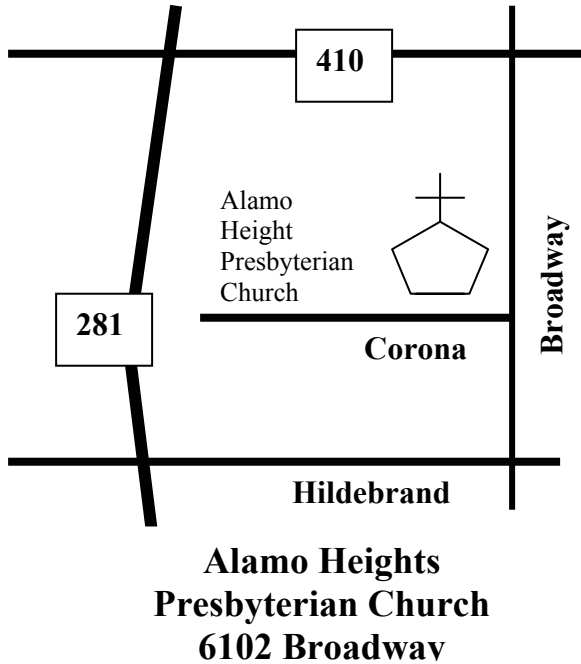
After a long day of fishing, many members met at the Big Fisherman for dinner. The past and current fishing successes and failures were discussed. The food was reported to be good.

After dinner, Bruce Young and John Marfin arrived and fished most of the night on the Fin and Feather Pier. Probably, the reason they fished most of the night was they were catching fish. Bruce said that they caught more than thirty trout each. Not sleeping when they could be fishing, Bruce, John, Mike Copeland, and Lyn Lennox fished the jetties most of the day on Sunday.

Some members returned home early on Sunday others fished the locations they had on Saturday.

The good company, calm wind, clear water, and the presents of red fish and trout seems to have made the trip enjoyable ■

Where to Find Us



AFF Web Site--<http://www.alamoflyfishers.org>

Regular Activities

Meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month, 7 p.m. at Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church, 6201 Broadway.

Fly tying sessions are held every Tuesday at 7 p.m., with the exception of meeting night. Bring your vise and tying gear or just come and share in the discussion.

Alamo Fly Fishers club officers

Clay Gill	President	491-0555
Jay Forrest	Vice-Pres.	490-3732
Todd Fleming	Treasurer	497-3062
Jon King	Outings	378-7414
Buddy Robichaux	Education	492-7125
Mike Richards	Newsletter	641-7268

Local Fly Shops

Tackle Box Outfitters

6330 N. New Braunfels
 San Antonio, TX 78209
 210-821-5807
 Fax 210-821-5807
tackleboxoutfitters.com

One Shot Outdoors

18720 Stone Oak Parkway Suit 105
 San Antonio, TX 78258
 210-402-5344
 Fax 210-402-5365
oneshotoutdoors.com

Gruene Outfitters

1629 Hunter Road
 New Braunfels, TX 78130
 830-625-4440

Northwest Tackle Center

6850 Bandera Road
 San Antonio, TX 78238
 210-681-0009
 Fax 210-681-0067

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