

# WindKnots

A monthly publication of the Texas Flyfishers

Volume 24 / Issue 3

March 2005

## TFF Meeting Update

**Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 29th.** The place will be the Uptown Hotel which, in case you have not heard, is the new name of the old Holiday Inn on I-10 and Antoine. The doors open at 7:00 p.m. and the business part of the meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

The **March** speaker is Pete Barrett who wrote an article published in a recent issue of the *Wind Knots*. Pete does a yearly fly fishing pilgrimage from Utah to Alaska and fishing all along the way. He will join us to talk about the experience.

## The Chuck Scates Benefit Tournament

*By Jerry Loring*

Every now and then there comes an opportunity to express one's gratitude and respect. For serious fly fishers, another such opportunity will present itself on Saturday, September 24, 2005 when we may enjoy a day of fishing and camaraderie to express our gratitude and respect for Captain Chuck Scates.

As almost every fly fisher on the Texas coast knows, Chuck Scates has recently completed a series of operations and a round of chemotherapy which made up his cancer treatment. The outlook is good. In fact, Chuck has been given the go-ahead to

resume guiding this spring. This is great news.

Even with all of this going on in his life, Chuck has graciously donated a guided trip for our 2005 TFF auction. Each year, he has been a willing contributor of fishing trips. I cannot think of a single auction event when his trip was not one of the top three items on offer. We thank Chuck for his support.

Now we can demonstrate our respect and admiration for Chuck by participating in a benefit fishing tournament to be held in his honor. It will be in Rockport and the entry fee is \$200 per person. Teams will be comprised of two people and all awards will be in the form of donated gear, tackle, art, and hunting and fishing trips. To sign up or for more information, please call Maryhelen at 361-729-0664 or Mike at 361-790-5537. All proceeds will go towards paying for Chuck's medical expenses.

See you there.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **The 2005 Billy Sandifer Surf Fest**

The 2005 Padre Island outing with Billy Sandifer will be held on the weekend of September 24-25. This is a date recommended by Billy for shots at tarpon and jack crevalle. This will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual outing with Billy and each trip has led to jacks, ladyfish, speckled trout, and sharks. Many tarpon have been jumped with none yet landed. Last year, all participants caught fish. One esteemed executive member was "fortunate" enough to have two fly lines lost to monster fish.

As with last year, we are limiting the number of daily participants that Billy will guide to a maximum of eight anglers per day for a total of sixteen fishermen over the course of the two days. We arrange the schedule so that nobody gets to fish twice with Billy unless everyone has already had a chance to go once. Those not fishing with him are, of course, free to fish the surf or anywhere else on their own. And as usual, we will camp on the beach and enjoy some evening fishing.

A four wheel drive vehicle is necessary to make it to the camping area. In past trips, there have been plenty of vehicles to give rides to those with two wheel drive. Recommended rigs for the outing are 10-weight and up, though it seems that the 8-weight crowd actually jumps more tarpon (yet have a slim-to-none chance of landing them).

To sign up, contact Scott Fossum. To reserve a spot, a non-refundable \$50 deposit is required. The estimated total per person cost for the trip (of which all proceeds go towards Billy's guide fee) is \$125. Spots will be reserved on a first-come first-served basis based on the receipt of your deposit. Checks should be made payable to the Texas Flyfishers.

### **Louisiana Madness Outing Information**

We need to know if anyone is interested in attending an outing in Louisiana this June. The outing will be "guided" by Captain Ron Begnaud of RedChaser. Ron was the featured speaker at the October 2004 meeting. Scott Fossum fished with Ron last October and had a good day and recommends him. The outing concept is for Ron to take two people in his boat and guide/direct two additional club members manning their own boats. The cost will be \$350 plus \$75 per club member boat. The total cost for such an outing would be \$500. Also required is a Louisiana fishing license.

Ron is amenable to fishing either the Sabine Lake or Lake Calcasieu marshes. What is needed is interest in this outing. Those who are should contact Scott Fossum for more details.

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### **Question-of-the-Month**

*Everything you ever wanted to know about fly fishing but were too afraid to ask...*

***Q: What are the best techniques, tools, and materials to form epoxy heads on crab flies and large saltwater streamers?***

## Tinkering at the Tying Bench

By Corey Rich

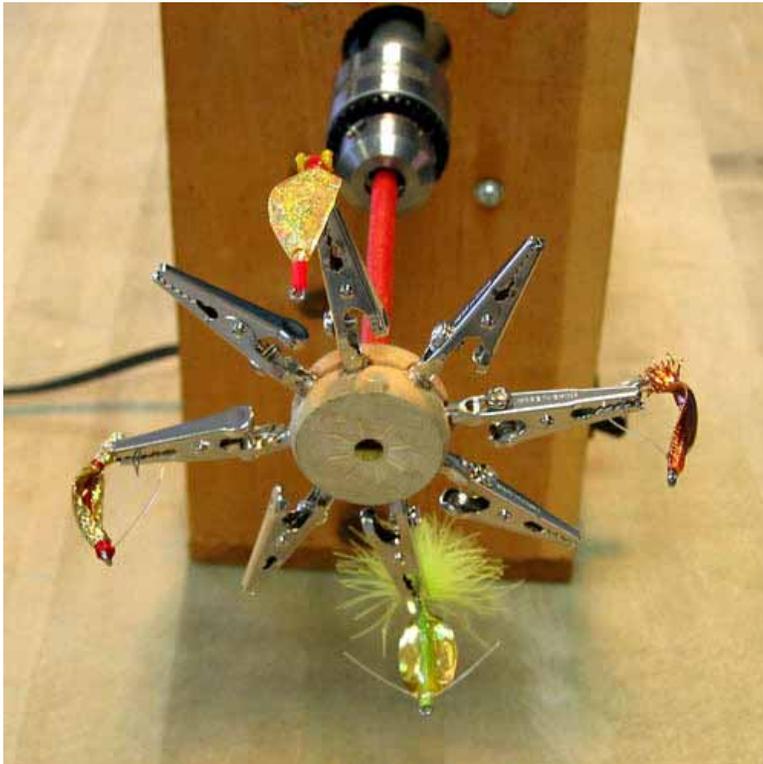
I've always wanted a Lazy Susan-type arrangement for holding lots of different colors of Krystal Flash and Flashabou. And I've always wanted a foolproof drying wheel for epoxy flies. Too often the flies, especially those with weed guards, have popped off the foam disk attached to my turning motor. It makes Tira Jane cranky and irritable when she finds them epoxied to the carpet below.

It occurred to me that the wonderful construction supplies found in a Tinker Toy set could be used to advantage to build both gadgets. With no grandchildren to steal them from, I went to eBay and bought a ragged assortment of wheels and sticks for \$3.00 plus shipping, and I bought some alligator clips from Radio Shack for another couple of bucks.



The first photo shows the Lazy Susan. It's not nearly as elegant as the new offering Orvis is introducing, but it does the job.

The second photo shows the drying wheel. I glued the alligator clips into the eight holes in the Tinker Toy wheel using Zap-A-Dap-A-Goo II. (It's really amazing stuff. You should have a tube at the bench. It's the strongest, fastest drying adhesive I've found for attaching eyes to flies, or just about anything to anything.) TJ's carpet is now safe from falling epoxy flies, and my epoxy flies are safe from carpet fuzz.



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## ***President's Corner***

by Jerry "Buggywhip" Loring, president, Texas Flyfishers

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Many of you know that Captain Chuck Scates is battling throat cancer and has undergone several operations and chemotherapy. Just this weekend, Chuck reported some very good news. The doctors are allowing him to resume guiding this spring.

This is wonderful news for Chuck and his wife Lynn. The two of them together have fostered fly fishing along the Texas coast. They managed Redfish Lodge for several years until Chuck's passion for fishing got the better of him and he switched back to full-time guiding.

He was one of the fly fishing pioneers along the Texas coast. I believe that Captain Chuck, who then worked out of South Padre Island, sported the first business card that boldly proclaimed himself to be a "Professional Fly Fishing Guide."

I once commented that black drum were difficult to catch on a fly. Chuck waited until I was finished talking about the lack of success that I and many other fly fishers were having with this quarry. Then he said, "It's all technique when casting to black drum." He explained how they are bottom feeders and use their barbells to find food. Then they inhale the food with an inward gulp of water that activates their taste sensors which immediately go to work verifying that what they have just eaten is indeed edible.

Chuck's technique takes advantage of the four to five seconds this process requires to complete. When sight fishing for drum, he recommends casting directly in front of the fish and allowing the fly to settle on the bottom. The drum will swim very near to the fly and do one of two things. The drum may make a slight dipping or swaying movement. Or, nothing may appear to happen as it just stares at the fly. If you observe even the slightest wiggle or sway or dip, strip-strike quickly because odds are that the fly has been inhaled. Alternately, if nothing appears to be happening within five seconds after the fish stops at the fly, strip-strike because the fish has likely inhaled the fly and will determine it is not food and will spit it out.

This technique has worked consistently since the first time I tried it. Captain Chuck has many other techniques for catching triple tail and ladyfish, for sunny days, windy days, high tide days and so on. Chuck knows sight casting and flats fishing. Treat yourself and book one of his trips. It will be a good fishing day and a great learning experience.

Turn about is fair play so check out the notice about a benefit tournament for Captain Chuck Scates on the front page of this issue of the *Wind Knots*. Friends of his have organized a fishing tournament in Rockport to defray a portion of Chuck's medical expenses. We hope to see you there.

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## OUTINGS SCHEDULE

Our outings schedule is an ongoing work-in-progress. Here are the trips we have currently scheduled for 2005. Sometimes dates and places change, so check here regularly. [Blue font indicates recent changes.](#)

To volunteer as a trip leader, contact fresh water outings chairman Clarke Thornton or salt water outings chairman Scott Fossum. Their telephone numbers and email addresses are on the Executive Committee listing later in this issue. Fresh water trips are designated [F], salt water [S] in the listings below.



February 20, 2005. "Guadalupe One Fly," Guadalupe River, Sattler, Texas. Trout [F]. Float or wade as you wish. CANCELLED DUE TO HIGH WATER.

February 27, 2005. Yegua Creek - Newmans Bottom, Burton, Texas. White bass [F]. Bank fishing access. CANCELLED DUE TO HIGH WATER.

*Clarke Thornton*  
*- fresh*

March 18-20, 2005. "Sowbug Round Up," Mountain Home, Arkansas. Trout [F].



*Scott Fossum - salt*

March 19-20, 2005. Port Mansfield, TX [S]. Sight-fishing the Lower Laguna Madre flats for redfish, trout and drum. Stay in a hotel or, if there is sufficient interest, we may rent a bay house with lighted pier. Boat required. Scott Fossum leader. Contact Scott for outing, lodging, or fishing info.

April 3, 2005. Yegua Creek, Newman's Bottom, Texas. White Bass [F].

April 9-10, 2005. Lower Mountain Fork River, Broken Bow, Oklahoma. Trout [F].

April 17, 2005. Loring's Secret Bass Lake, Bellville, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

April [TBD](#), 2005. Lighthouse Lakes kayaking, Aransas Pass, TX [S]. Ralph Adams, leader (contact information on Executive Committee listing). [Kayak rental available nearby from Dean Thomas, proprietor of Slowride's Kayak Shack in Aransas Pass \(www.slowrideguide.com\).](#)

May 7, 2005. "Sunfish Spectacular," Seven Lakes, Damon, Texas. Sunfish & Bass [F].

May 14, 2005. Brown & Root Flats kayaking, Aransas Pass, TX [S]. Ralph Adams, leader (contact information on Executive Committee listing). [Kayak rental available nearby from Dean Thomas, proprietor of Slowride's Kayak Shack in Aransas Pass \(www.slowrideguide.com\).](#)

June 11-12, 2005. Llano River, Junction, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

June 2005. Louisiana Madness, Lake Charles, LA [S]. Leader needed.

July 9-10, 2005. Frio River, Uvalde, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

[July 23-24, 2005. Port Aransas jetties, Port Aransas, TX \[S\] Guided trip by Lefty Ray Chapa \(www.leftyray.com see his web sight for pictures\). We will take the last ferry over on Saturday afternoon at 6:00 PM. Fish all night and return on Sunday morning's ferry. This is two days from a full moon and tarpon, jacks, bull reds and trout are expected. This trip will cost an estimated \\$85 per person. No boat or kayak required.](#)

July 30, 2005. "Port O'Connor One Fly" Tournament, Port O'Connor, TX [S]. Scott Fossum, leader. Rotating crystal trophy up for grabs. Most inches of fish caught on the first fly you tie on wins. Boat or kayak needed.

August 6, 2005. San Marcos River Float Trip, San Marcos, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

August 27, 2005. "Redfish Rodeo," [Rockport, TX](#) [S]. Jerry Loring, leader.

September 10, 2005. Location to be determined. Bass & Panfish [F].

[September 24-25](#), 2005. "Padre Island Surf Fest" [S]. Fish Padre Island National Seashore guided by Billy Sandifer for tarpon and jack crevalle. Optional camping on beach. Estimated \$125 cost for one day of guided fishing, the 2nd day is on your own. \$50 non-refundable deposit required to reserve space. Scott Fossum leader.

October – South Padre Island, TX [S]. Rick Rawls, leader.

October 8, 2005. Seven Lakes at Damon, Damon, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

October – Nighthawk Bay (Bird Island Basin) in the Padre Island National Seashore in/near Corpus Christi/Port Aransas. Kayak, boat and walk-in opportunities abound both on the flats and in the surf. Leader needed.

November 6, 2005. Guadalupe River, Sattler, Texas. Trout [F]

December 2005. No outings.

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## **Five Tarpon Flies**

*By Chris Summers*

Ask ten people their opinion on the ultimate game fish. Odds are that more than one will say tarpon, the Silver King. I can't argue with them. My grandfather lived in Key West and we would visit him every spring and fish for tarpon. We used light bait casting (20#) or spinning (8# and 12#) tackle, but never the long rod. We did see fly anglers going after these great fish with buggy whips and I assumed they were nuts. I guess that's why I fit in so well.

I still haven't had the chance to match wits with Mr. Tarpon on a fly rod. But I have been fortunate to spend some time with a few legends of the sport. They include Lefty Kreh, Stu Apte, Billy Pate, Capt. Jimmy Albright, and Capt. Jose Wejebe. Of these, I think that my conversations with Lefty probably did more to help me understand the differences in tarpon flies. Lefty reminds me of my father because they both have an ability to explain the most difficult operations clearly. That said, here is my fly box of tarpon flies.

Tarpon flies are generally classified into two major categories: clear water or "Keys" style and deep or dirty water patterns. The clear water flies split into two categories: small tarpon flies for fish up to 20 pounds, and large tarpon flies for fish weighing over 20 pounds. Other than size, the patterns are similar for both classes of fish. The Keys tarpon fly is usually a shorter, more supple fly that will "swim" with each strip. These flies are designed for sight fishing on the flats and may be tied in bright or natural colors. The angler is banking on the fish seeing the fly. The flies in the picture below are a Homossasa Tarpon Fly (tied by Billy Pate), Dan Blanton's whistler, Lenny's Tarpon Shrimp (tied by Capt. Lenny Moffo), the Cockroach (tied by Chico Fernandez), and the Black Death (tied by Joe Brahnham).

The deep or dirty water flies have big, bulky bodies and wings. These flies are usually weighted and fished on sinking lines. They are designed to push water and create turbulence when stripped. While color is not the most important aspect of this type of fly, black or other dark colors seem to be the most effective. Several patterns make up this category, but the most popular is Dan Blanton's whistler (top right). This fly was originally designed and tied for striper fishing off the coast of California. It gained popularity for tarpon fishing when Dan tied

the first "Casa Mar Tarpon Fly," a dark, bulkier version of the whistler to accommodate the stained water in the Costa Rican rivers around that famed tarpon camp. This fly was also effective for fooling the local population of snook, jacks, and snapper. It's also a good pattern for Texas tarpon while fishing from the jetties.

I'm still waiting to catch my first tarpon on a fly. Learning about them from some of the true legends of the sport has done nothing to dampen my desire. Maybe it will be this summer when we gang up on them at the Port Aransas jetties. Do you think it's a coincidence that Port Aransas was once called Tarpon, Texas?



**Five Tarpon Flies** (from left-to-right, top-to-bottom): 1) Homossasa tarpon fly, 2) Dan Blanton's Whistler, 3) Lenny's Tarpon Shrimp, 4) the Cockroach, and 5) the Black Death.

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## About Wind Knots

*Wind Knots* is your monthly newsletter, and it needs your help – otherwise we'll run out of things to print. Email your articles, photos, artwork, graphics, fishing news, tall tales, lies, and letters to the editor to [ralphnchristineadams@earthlink.net](mailto:ralphnchristineadams@earthlink.net) not later than the 10th of the month for that month's issue. **Be sure to put the words *Wind Knots* in the subject line of your e-mail.** If you don't, I might think it's spam or worse and delete it before opening.

If you have digital photos, please send them via e-mail in .JPG format. If you have paper photos, mail them to Corey Rich, 1900 N. Memorial Way, Houston, TX 77007. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for their return.

The preferred form for text – stories, letters, and so forth – is in Microsoft Word. Please try to keep your offerings in the 800 to 1,000 word range, or less. If you send photos along with an article, proposed captions are appreciated.

*Wind Knots* is posted on the club's Web site as soon as it becomes available. Check [www.texasflyfishers.org](http://www.texasflyfishers.org) regularly for the latest newsletter and other news of interest.

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## WIND KNOTS CLASSIFIEDS

Space permitting, we'll run "Wanted" and "For Sale" ads for members of Texas Flyfishers. On a case-by-case basis, we may also run ads from non-members if the goods or services sought or offered would be of interest to our members. Send your ad by e-mail to [ralphnchristineadams@earthlink.net](mailto:ralphnchristineadams@earthlink.net). You may include a photograph of items to be sold if you like.



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## Texas Flyfishers Membership Application

Please check one:     New Application         Renewal

To join Texas Flyfishers or renew your membership, please complete this form and mail it with your check to the address below, or bring it with you to one of our monthly meetings. All memberships expire June 30th of each year, and renewals are due July 1st. New members, please pro-rate your payment for the number of months between now and the end of June, inclusive. Our monthly meetings are held on the last Tuesday of every month (except December), beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Dues are for (check one):     Individual at \$24 a year         Family at \$32 a year         Student at \$16 a year

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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