



# TVFF Club News

March 2023



## March 16<sup>th</sup> Program

### Stephen Rockarts, Fly Fishing Alabama



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#### Welcome New Members:

Mike Baker  
Alan Clemons  
Chad Gay

#### This Month

- March 9 – Fly Tying, 7 PM
- March 16 – TVFF Meeting, 7 PM
- March 23 – Fly Tying, 7 PM

#### Officers and Directors

President: Steve Kerkhof  
Vice President: Dana Beyerle  
Secretary: Gary Jedlovec  
Treasurer: Dave Bailey  
Membership: Debbie Hill  
Activities: Larry Hice  
Education: Fred Kaufmann  
Conservation: Bob Lowery  
Communications: Connor Baker

#### Board of Directors Meeting

The next BOD meeting is May 4, 2023,  
at 7 p.m. in Room 201.

Our March program will be presented by Stephen Rockarts. Stephen has an impressive resume. He is owner and guide with [Fly Fishing Alabama](#), an ambassador for Cahaba River Keepers, a Calico Fly Rod Professional Guide, vice-chair of Alabama Native Fish Coalition, a Sam's One Bug Pro Angler, and a River Rat Rafts Professional Guide.

Stephen is a PTA in an outpatient orthopedic clinic. When he is not working, he is fishing the Cahaba River and Locust Fork, guiding trips for new anglers all the way up to the most experienced anglers. Stephen specializes in targeting larger, Alabama bass as well as redeye bass.

On his full-day trips, he offers creekside burgers cooked on his Tembo Tusk Skottle grill. He said he takes pride in his ability to target fish and cook a creekside meal.

## TVFF Fly Tying Group

Fly tying sessions will be conducted at Faith Presbyterian Church, Room 201, at 7 p.m.



**March 9, 7 PM**

**Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear– Tyer: Connor Baker**

Cost: \$2.00 in person

Another good tie! We won't be using the hare's mask, but will be using some good hare's fur dubbing.

### Materials

**Hook:** 3X-long nymph hook (here, a Dai-Riki 285), sizes 12-20.

**Bead:** 7/64-inch, gold.

**Weight:** .015 lead-free round wire.

**Thread:** 6/0, olive.

**Rib:** Ultra Wire, brassie size, gold.

**Tail and wingcase:** 10-12 pheasant-tail fibers.

**Abdomen and thorax:** Hair's mask and rabbit-fur dubbing, mixed.



**March 23, 7 PM**

**Damsel Fly Nymph– Fred Kaufmann**

Fun nymph to fish! Another good beginner fly.

### Materials

**Hook:** Nymph Hook

**Thread:** Green thread

**Weight:** Damsel eyes

**Tail:** Green Marabou

**Body:** Green Dubbing



If you would like to help out with our fly tying group and lead a session, email [editor@tvff.club](mailto:editor@tvff.club)

*All are welcome! Fly tying equipment is available for new tyers. Come and discover the joy of catching fish on a fly you tied or, better yet, one of your own design. The sessions are the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays at 7 p.m.*



## Fish of the Month

TVFF member, David Marshall took advantage of the trout pond at Madison County Lake. There might be some left, go check it out!



TVFF member, Dana Beyerle, caught the above Brown on a 4-weight 8-6 Redington with Redington reel. Green wooly/woolly bugger. He also caught about six bows on various wet flies... drifting technique. And hooked about an 18-incher. Jumped twice and threw barbless hook when I reached for my net.

TVFF members, Cody Jansto and Connor Baker did some small pond early season bass fishing in February. They had some luck. Each catching bass. It was their first bass of the year. Please send any fish pictures to [editor@tvff.club](mailto:editor@tvff.club)



## February Meeting Recap

The February program was about the FFI Basscatch Project. Members David Hatfield and Steve Kerkhof talked about the eight black bass species in Alabama, the watersheds where they are found and tips on identification. The club is planning group fishing days to target the Basscatch species.

## First Basscatch Fishing Day

The first Basscatch fishing day was Saturday Feb 25<sup>th</sup>. Seven of us tried our luck on Aldridge Creek. There was some rain but the temperature was around 60 degrees, so it was a pretty good day for February. We caught a few fish, mostly bream and a couple of crappie, but David Heim caught some small largemouth bass.



## February Fly Tying

For the month of February we tied two classic trout flies. The Zebra Midge and Woolly Bugger. We had great turnout for both! Join us the second and fourth Thursday of each month!



## A Swordfish Caught on Fly From Shore

Below is a brief synopsis from Sport Fishing Magazine's website. The entire article authored by Ric Burnley and published February 24, 2023 can be found [here](#).

Maldives flyfishing guide, Thomas Paulsen, landed the fish of a lifetime on his day off, he landed a swordfish! What is more, he did it while wading!

On his day off from guiding, Paulsen went fishing with his Winston Air Salt 9-foot, 12-weight. He was fishing a green streamer on a 8/0 Gamakatsu hook.

While fishing a large fish moved towards him. He decided to wait for it to move in range and cast at it. To his surprise, he ended up hooking a swordfish. A very rare thing when wade fishing, especially from a fly rod.

After fighting the fish for awhile, landing it was another story. Paulsen had to call a friend over to help subdue the fish. With all the coral and sharp bill, things could get dangerous.

In the end, the fish ended up weighing 102 pounds and measured five feet long! According to Paulsen, "In 40 years of fishing, this is the craziest thing that has ever happened to me. I just can't understand the huge amount of luck."



Photo: Thomas Paulsen, Sport Fishing



## Angling to Improve Public Fishing Lakes

By David Rainer

Yellow Hammer News, February 18, 2023, the entire article can be found [here](#).

**The Alabama State Public Fishing Lakes (PFLs) program is adapting to better serve the citizens of the state who depend on these lakes for recreational angling opportunities.**

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (ADCNR) Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries (WFF) Division manages 23 PFLs in 20 counties throughout the state to serve areas without easy access to the numerous larger lakes, rivers and reservoirs. The WFF-run lakes range in size from 13 to 184 acres for a total of 1,912 surface acres. Each lake is intensively managed to provide sustainable, quality fishing for numerous species, including largemouth bass, bluegill and redear sunfish (shellcracker). Catchable-size channel catfish are stocked in each lake during the winter. Many lakes have opportunities to catch crappie, and a few are stocked with hybrid striped bass.

During the COVID pandemic, Alabamians were flocking to the PFLs as a way to get outside when other activities were limited. That bump has now dissipated to usage lower than pre-COVID, and WFF is trying to boost the use of the PFLs.

"We're changing the model of how some of our PFLs are run. We're looking at several lake renovations in the next couple of years that will provide great fishing opportunities. The way they were run when they were first started in the 1950s is just not working the same for a lot of our lakes. We're changing the management model and how we manage the fish populations."

One of the challenges recently is finding lake managers who are willing to make a significant commitment to the property. Lake managers are not state employees and operate the lakes as contractors for the state

Their income is derived from the sale of fishing permits and concession sales from the bait shop. When managers leave, WFF has had difficulty finding replacements.

Chris Greene, WFF's chief of Fisheries, said the department is looking at new approaches to keep the PFLs open.

"We're having a difficult time finding lake managers," Greene said. "Do we look for partnerships with local governments? Do we keep the lakes open with no manager on site? We're looking at different approaches because we're being forced into it."

"In society as a whole, it's becoming increasingly difficult to find people for certain positions in the workforce. I think that's what we're dealing with. It takes a special type of person to run these lakes. You want somebody who interacts well with the public and has a good work ethic. You want somebody with the skills to repair things around the lake property. You have to find somebody who doesn't mind being confined to working long hours at a lake environment. It takes a special kind of person to be open to that, who enjoys that, enjoys serving customers at the lake. Those people are becoming harder and harder to find."

Continued on the next page



## Angling to Improve Public Fishing Lakes (cont.)

“And we’ve had to close a few of our lakes because of infrastructure issues. Some of these lakes are beyond the useful life of the standpipes or drain tower or whatever it may be. It’s not what we want to do, but repairs have to be made. We’ve probably got more lakes right now that are closed than we’ve ever had because of those two problems – finding a lake manager and/or infrastructure repair. The budget only goes so far.”

Greene said access to the PFLs is important to those with limited resources and limited mobility.

“The lakes are located in more rural areas where fishing opportunities were limited,” he said. “These lakes were put there for those folks who had been driving two or three hours to find a good place to fish. The PFLs were put in those counties to serve those constituents. And the fishing is good. It’s business as usual at the lakes that are open, and we’re hoping to get the ones offline open as soon as possible.”

Brown said WFF is working toward finalizing plans on some of these lakes. Barbour County Lake is drained right now because of infrastructure issues. Chambers County Lake has been drained and restocked. Brown hopes that lake will be reopen in the spring of next year. Escambia County Lake, once known for its 10-pound-plus bass, has an unbalanced fish population and is in need of attention.

New managers have been hired at Lee County Lake, Walker County Lake, Dallas County Lake and Geneva County Lake. Brown hopes those lakes will be open in the next few weeks. WFF is looking for a new manager for Clay County Lake.

Brown said the diversity in lake sizes and habitat qualities gives anglers a wide variety of fishing opportunities, and he couldn’t say which lake is favored over another.

“It depends on what the public likes to fish for,” Brown said. “Each lake has its own unique perks. You can go to one lake and catch more bluegills than others. If you’re looking for double-digit bass, every year they’re pulling big bass out of DeKalb County Lake, which had an 11-pounder caught there recently. We renovated Washington County Lake a couple of years ago, and there’s some good bass fishing there.

“But I wouldn’t say one stands out in all areas over another. People who like to catch bream will like one lake over another one, and the same goes for bass, catfish or crappie.”

WFF does stock two fish-out ponds at two lakes, Madison and Walker, for a different species – rainbow trout. Unfortunately, trout were not stocked this year at Walker because of a lack of a manager, but the trout fishing at Madison has been extremely popular this year.

“Our PFLs offer great opportunities to catch a variety of different fish species,” Brown said. “In the near future, after we renovate our PFLs, anglers will have a higher quality fishing experience for several years. That’s our plan.”

Visit [www.outdooralabama.com/where-fish-alabama/alabama-public-fishing-lakes-pfls](http://www.outdooralabama.com/where-fish-alabama/alabama-public-fishing-lakes-pfls) for more information and an interactive map of the locations of the lakes.

## Fly Rods For Sale

TVFF member Dana Beyerle has two Orvis fly rods and rod case for sale:

- Orvis TLS Power Matrix, 4-weight, 8-6, case. New between \$325 and \$395, or \$420 to \$510 in today's dollars. Comes with nice Orvis case. Got at estate sale. Asking \$200.
- Orvis Clearwater Mid Flex 4-weight, 8-6. Sold new for \$179, or \$247 in today's dollars. Last made in 2007. With Orvis case.
- Orvis travel case. Asking \$25

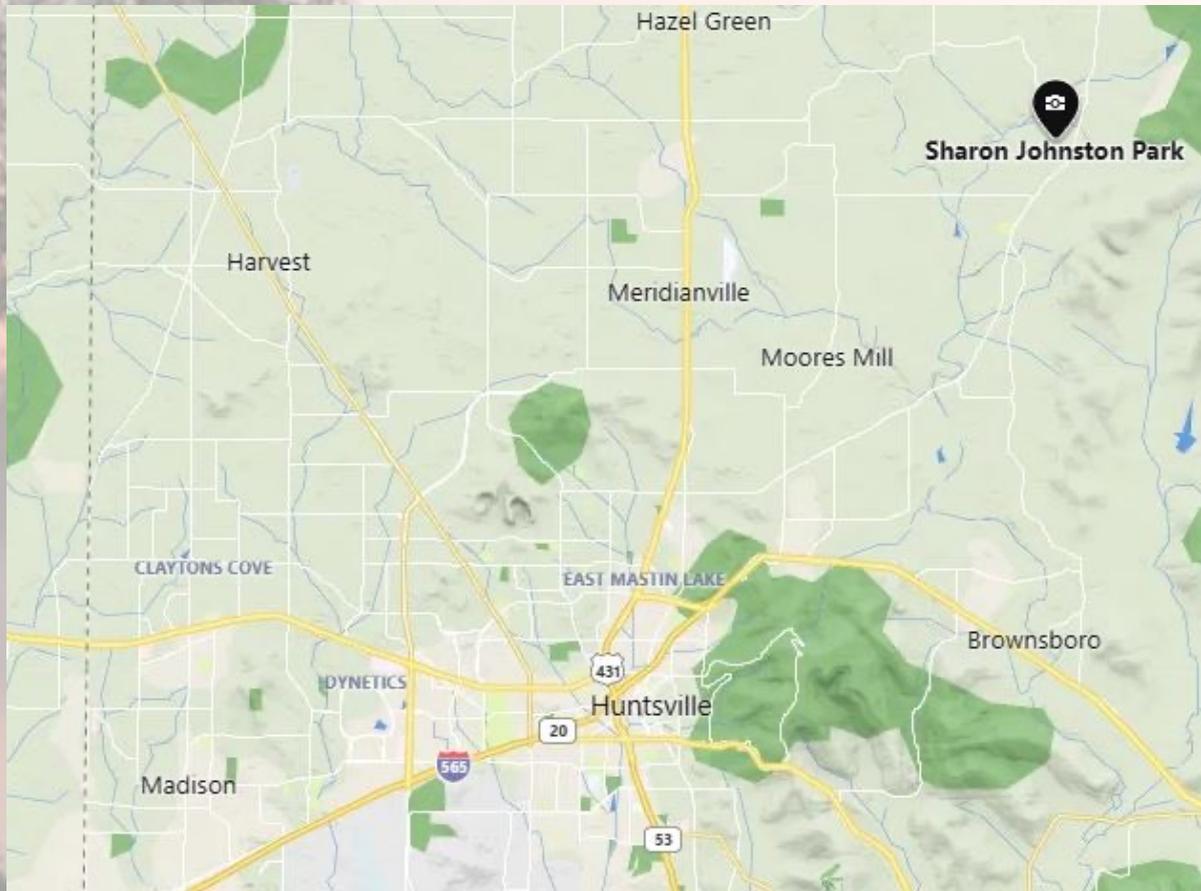
All items are in good condition. Pictures are below. For more information. Contact Dana at 334-546-8833.



## Upcoming Events

### Next Basscatch Day

The next group fishing day is Saturday March 18 at Sharon Johnston Park in New Market. More details will follow.



### Sowbug Roundup

World renowned fly tying and fly fishing expo is back for its 26<sup>th</sup> iteration. It will be happening this month, 23-25 March. It costs \$10 per person for all three days. There will be over 150 fly tying experts and over 20 vendors. For more information on the event, view their website [here](#). This event will be especially fun for anyone with interest in fly tying.



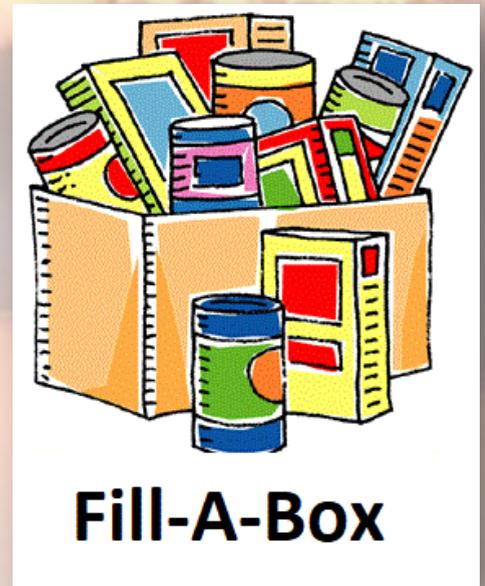
## ***Fly Line Recycling***

Flyvines is a Montana company that “upcycles” used fly line into bracelets, lanyards, dog collars, sunglass straps and other useful items that give used fly line a second life. The picture shows used fly line collected by TVFF in 2019 that didn’t end up in a landfill. The pandemic kept us from doing that in 2020 but we’d like to participate again this year. If you respool your fly reels with new line then please coil it up and bring it to us. TVFF will pack it in a box and send it Flyvines. It is a small thing you can do to be kind to the environment and support our conservation efforts.



## ***Food Drive Box***

Faith Presbyterian Church has a community food drive box outside of the church, in their parking lot. This box receives and distributes food staple items to members of the community in need. If you would like to help, please bring non-perishable items to place in the box. Faith Presbyterian Church has generously let us use Room 201 for years. The least we can do is provide food to members of their church community in need.



## **Your Attendance is Requested**

Earn a chance to win a free one-year TVFF/FFI membership. For each TVFF meeting that you attend on Feb 16, Mar 16 and Apr 20 or by attending a TVFF tying meeting on Feb 9, 23, Mar 9, 23 and Apr 13, you are eligible to enter the drawing. The more meetings you participate in the better your chances to win! The winner will be drawn and announced at the TVFF meeting on April 20. The free one-year membership can be applied to your existing membership to extend it for an additional year or you may use it to pay for a new member you would like to recruit. See you at an upcoming meeting!



## March Holidays

### National Napping Day

**Date When Celebrated :** March 13

National Napping Day is an unofficial holiday which is celebrated annually the day right after the return of daylight savings time. The purpose of this holiday is to give everyone a chance to catch up on some much-needed rest after the clocks have sprung ahead. In several studies, it has been shown that even a 20 or 30-minute nap can have a positive effect on mental alertness and cognitive ability. So grab your favorite blanket and lay your head down for a few moments on this lazy holiday.

#### Nap Facts

- Naps around 20 or 30 minutes are best for improved short-term alertness.
- Napping three times a week results in a 37% decrease in heart related deaths
- Naps can improve performance by 34%
- In Ancient Rome, it was common to take a nap after lunch
- 60 million Americans are sleep-deprived at any one time
- Humans are the only mammals to plan or delay naps
- Just thinking about a nap can lower blood pressure
- Most mammals nap



### National Meatball Day

**Date When Celebrated :** March 9

For years, meatballs have taken a back seat to spaghetti but that is no longer the case thanks to the introduction of National Meatball Day – a holiday which is celebrated annually on March 9th. This unofficial holiday is the perfect day to celebrate the little orbs of meat that make so many dishes so special. So whether you like meatballs on your spaghetti, love Swedish meatballs or simply flip over meatball subs, then this holiday might just be the one that you want to celebrate.

As far as historians know, meatballs were first created around the 2nd century B.C in China. From there, it's believed that the meatball moved across the Mideast and finally traveled trade routes to make it throughout Europe. While many people think that meatballs came to the United States from Italy, that isn't the case. Spaghetti and meatballs were actually an invention of Italian-Americans. Later on, these Italian-Americans would then introduce meatballs to Italy. Today, just about every culture on the planet has their own form of meatballs.





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