



TVFF Club News

May 2023



May 18th Program

Phil Ekema, Alabama DCNR



Our May speaker, Phil Ekema, has been the district fisheries supervisor for the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in Tanner since 2018. He has worked as a district biologist aide, a fisheries aide, manager of the Carbon Hill state Fish Hatchery, and a district management biologist with the DCNR.

Phil earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Fisheries Biology from Iowa State University in 1982. He has worked for the Iowa Conservation Commission, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Veterans Administration as a lab technician.

In 1997, Phil was certified as a fisheries professional with the American Fisheries Society. He also is a certified Open Water I Scuba Diver (NAUI).

Phil and his wife, Lisa, have two sons. He enjoys bass fishing, hiking the Bankhead National Forest, and kayaking. Phil is a dedicated Iowa State Cyclones football and basketball fan.

In this issue

- [TVFF Fly Tying Group](#)
- [Fish of the Month](#)
- [Fishing the Cahaba](#)
- [April TVFF Recap](#)
- [Fish Consumption Advisory Bill Passes in Alabama](#)
- [Panfish on the Fly](#)
- [Record Breaking Gar](#)
- [TVFF Hats for Sale](#)
- [Other News](#)

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Welcome New Members:
Tom Burkett

This Month

- May 4 – BOD Meeting, 7 PM
- May 11 – Fly Tying, 7 PM
- May 18 – TVFF Meeting, 7 PM
- May 25 – 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 this month
May 4, 2023, at 7 p.m. in Room 201.

TVFF Fly Tying Group

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



May 11, 7 PM

March Brown Emerger – Ted Crona

Cost: \$2.00

An invention by Ted Crona, so you know it will catch fish!
Please bring 6/0, red is a good substitute for orange.

Materials

Hook – #10 TMC 200R or equivalent

Thread – Orange 6/0

Tail Shuck – Antron brown or orange

Body – Natural Hare's Ear or Tan Dubbing (blended with some spikey material)

Wing – Whitetail Body Deer Hair.



May 25 7PM

Foam Beetle 2.0 – David Heim

Cost: \$2.00

This pattern comes from Tim Flagler at Tightline video. It uses a different way of attaching the front legs. It is a successful pattern for our area, especially when fished in tandem with the gurgler that we tied last month.

Spending a few hours in the morning or evening on local creeks and streams with some terrestrial flies can be very rewarding.

Checkout [Foam Beetle 2.0 – YouTube](#) for a preview.

Materials

Hook: Size 14 dry fly hook

Thread: Black 180 denier thread

Under Body: 5 strands of peacock hurl

Body: ¼" strip of black 2mm craft foam

Sighter: Medium foam post cylinder

Legs: Black mini round rubber legs



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 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 7 p.m.



Fish of the Month

Plenty of good fish were caught this month! The weather has been consistently warm and folks are getting out there to catch fish! If you want to be featured in our newsletter, please send any fish pictures to editor@tvff.club



TVFF member, Dana Beyerle caught this nice Smallmouth Bass on the Flint! Hooked on sculpin fly, 6-weight St. Croix rod, safely released.



TVFF member, Greg Bayuga caught these fish in his neighborhood pond! A nice bass and Shellcracker.



TVFF member, Connor Baker did some Bluegill fishing over one weekend in April. Some of them were pretty large.

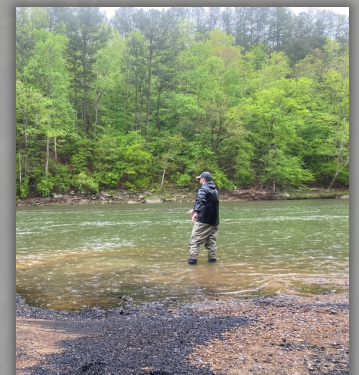
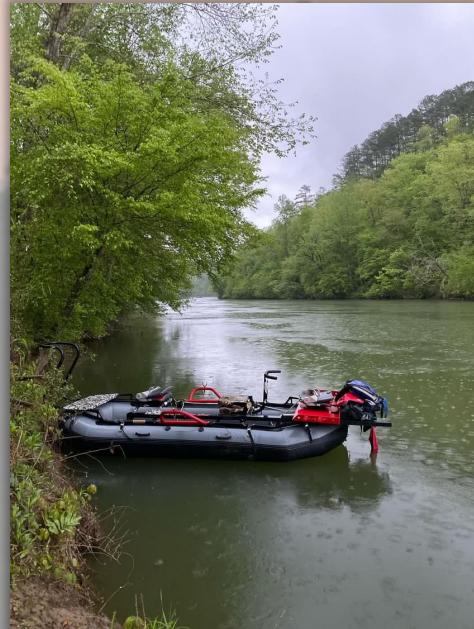


TVFF members Cody Jansto and Connor Baker got to fish Pisgah National Forest over a weekend in April. They explored many different streams and rivers. In total they spent two nights camping. Together they caught Brown, Rainbow and Brook Trout. It is a very beautiful area just outside of Asheville.



Fishing the Cahaba

TVFF members Slade Lutz and Connor Baker had a great time fishing the Cahaba River with guide and March guest speaker, Stephen Rockarts. Even though the temperature was cold and it was very rainy, water conditions were perfect and the fish were active. Around 40 fish were landed and there were multiple double ups. All fish were caught using [Calico Fly Rods](https://flyfishingalabama.com/), an Alabama brand based in Birmingham. Stephen is a great guide that knows these waters. He fixes a great lunch for the trip and works hard to put clients on fish. Anyone interested in fishing the Cahaba should reach out to him. His website can be found here: <https://flyfishingalabama.com/>



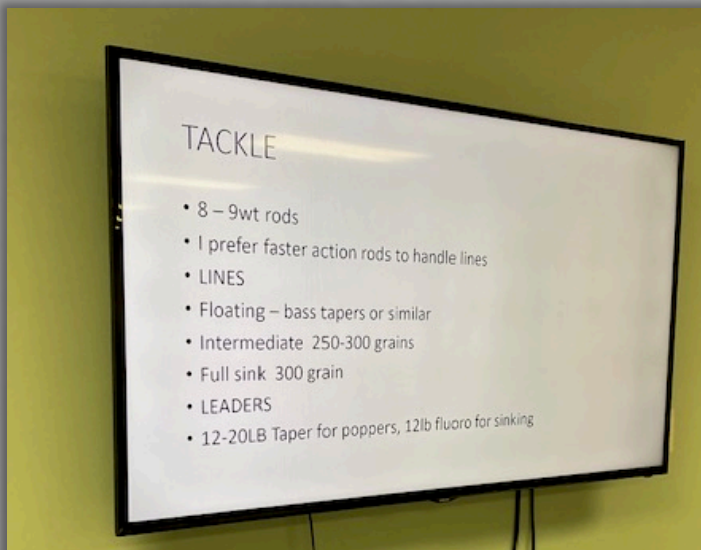
April Meeting Recap

Lake Guntersville fishing veteran Shannon McCurley was the club's April speaker. He covered the ins-and-outs of mostly largemouth bass fishing on the lake and along its wadable shores. Shannon owned and operated North Alabama Fly Fishing for 13 years and is an expert fly tier. His bass presentation focused on when, how, what to use, and where to fish

Shannon said different tactics are useful for the four north Alabama seasons but many of the tactics share several common traits: fish structure, including weeds, points, coves, underwater channels, and carry a supply of top water poppers, streamers, and imitation baitfish such as Clouser minnows: big being the key trait.

Fishing for largemouth in Lake Guntersville probably requires stronger leaders and tippets not only because of the size of fish that are possible but also because stronger line will prevent breakage if a fish wraps itself in weeds and will allow to pull through most snags in weeds.

Thanks to all that attended regular meetings and tying sessions during February, March and April and entered for the opportunity to win a free, one-year TVFF/FFI Membership. The winner was drawn on April 20th. Congratulations to Rodney Durrett! His winning entry was from a meeting he attended on February 16th. Thanks to all who participated!



Fish Consumption Advisory Bill Passes in Alabama

Not all fish in Alabama waterways are safe to eat. Recently, this has been a topic of discussion in Alabama's state congress. As fly fishermen we usually practice catch and release, but sometimes it is fun to keep a fish a two. An excerpt of the article can be found below. Read the full article [here](#).

A bill requiring more outdoor signage about fish consumption advisories near fishing spots cleared a House committee on Wednesday, but not before the required posting of legal pollutants in nearby waters was removed.

An amended House Bill 297, by Rep. Craig Lipscomb, R-Gadsden, was approved in the House Ports, Waterways and Intermodal Transit Committee. It would require more advisory information from the Alabama Department of Public Health and Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

It requires the departments to conduct regular fish tissue monitoring to evaluate safe consumption levels of fish species.

The bill was amended in committee to require less information on the signage in order to decrease the cost to the agencies. People instead would be directed to a website for more information.

As originally written, the bill required industries to post signage "within a reasonable distance from each discharge point identifying the pollution outfall into the receiving state waters."



Panfish on the Fly

April 25th of this month, Hatch Magazine published an article about fly fishing for panfish (Bluegill, Sunfish, Pumpkinseed, Rock Bass, Crappie, et al.). In Alabama, we have plenty of panfish opportunities. In fact, the world record Bluegill was caught in Alabama ([4 lbs 12 oz, Ketona Lake](#)). Check out this excerpt below, laying out some tips to fish successfully. The full article authored by George Daniel can be found [here](#).

- **Timing** – When the weather warms up, panfish get more active and can move into shallower water. Early morning after warm evenings is a great time to find panfish, as is later in the evening before dark.
- **Where to Fish** – A lot of times these fish are found right near the shoreline. Often short casts parallel to the shoreline are perfect. Look for structure and rocks under the water. This is typically where they hide.
- **Flies to Use** – A lot of trout flies can be used for panfish. Ones that are taking up space in your trout fly box can be repurposed for panfish. Try small dry flies and woolly buggers. All of those are perfect for panfish on a hot summer day.
- **Presentation** – Panfish takes can be aggressive. During warmer months you can move the fly, during cooler months an indicator with a jig bobbing underneath can be effective. Panfish aren't picky and are very forgiving.
- **Equipment** – Any trout rod works, and any 6 foot plus leader with 4x or 5x tippet can be successful. Because panfish mouths are small, bring hemostats to safely remove your fly.



Photo from Hatch.com

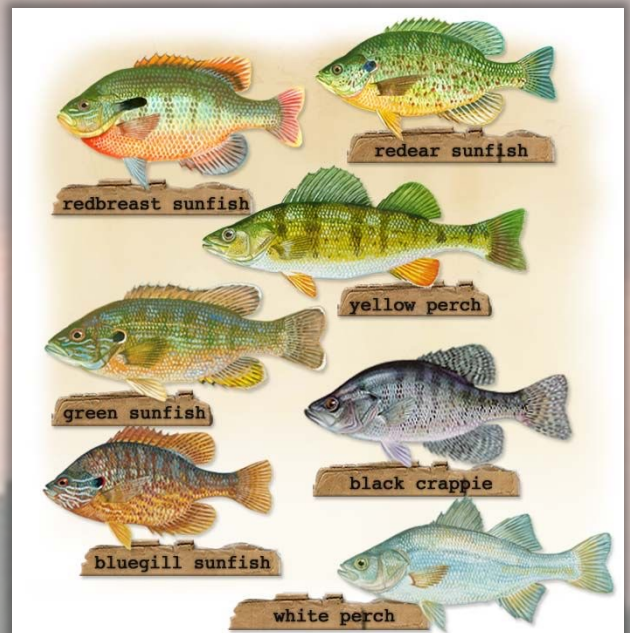


Photo from [Pinterest](#)



World-record Alligator Gar in Texas

An interesting article on world-record alligator gar caught on 80 pound line test by Kentucky fisherman. The article is authored by Chris Oberholtz from [Fox Weather](#). It was published April 23rd 2023. A summary of the article is below.

Earlier in April, angler Arthur Weston caught a record setting Alligator Gar on the Trinity River, just an hour and a half outside of Houston.

Weston regularly flies to Houston, targeting these large fish, getting close to this record multiple times. He caught some just under 200 pounds, but nothing near this 251 pound fish he landed on 80 pound test. Breaking the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) record.

Weston used cut up carp as bait, fighting the fish for just under half an hour. The fish literally dragged their boat.

This is an impressive fish, but nowhere near as impressive as Weston's 110 pound IGFA record gar caught on 2 pound test. That fight took 2.5 hours.



Photo from [Fox Weather](#)

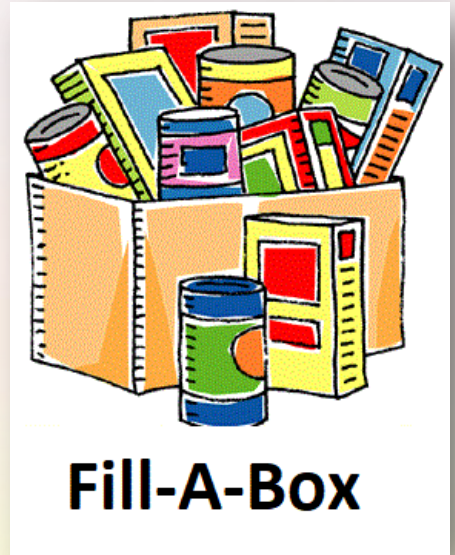
Hats For Sale

Hats are back! Depending on your style, we have two options. A cotton lower profile charcoal colored hat, and a dark green olive colored trucker hat! A picture of each hat is below and Debbie is modeling the green one. Each hat is \$20, and all money goes towards the club. Get yours just in time for Spring fishing. Who knows, it might even be your lucky hat! See David Bailey, Connor Baker, or Debbie Hill to get yours.



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.



Orvis at Earth Day

TVFF members Jonathan Craft, left, and Don Bowling, staff the Orvis booth at Earth Day, April 22, at Hays Nature Preserve in Huntsville. Don and Jonathan work at the Huntsville Orvis [store](#). Both know their stuff when it comes to fly fishing and can help you pick the right fly or find a new rod. If you have a chance pay them a visit.

May Weird Holidays

National Train Day

May 13th

A holiday observed on the Saturday closest to May 10th. It was started by Amtrak in 2008 to spread word on the advantages of traveling by railroad. Emphasizing the history and societal impacts of the railroad.

May 10th is the anniversary of pounding the golden spike in Promontory, Utah. Amtrak has distanced itself from promoting the holiday due to budget cuts, but fans of the railroad continue to celebrate it. The largest celebrations take place in Washington DC, Philadelphia, Chicago and Los Angeles.



World Turtle Day

May 23rd

Started in 2000 by the American Tortoise Rescue. It was created to raise awareness on turtles and tortoises and their disappearing habitats. Some folks promote it by dressing up as a turtle.

As fisherman, we have often run ins with turtles. Sometimes they can be a nuisance when fishing, stealing our flies and accidently getting hooked into one. But next time you see one, appreciate them and enjoy them!



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