

# First Coast Fly Fisher

March 2007

[www.fcff.org](http://www.fcff.org)

Jacksonville, FL

## Fish On

An Unusual Perspective From The Lens of Bart Issacs



Read Bart's Article On Tying the Sergeant Crab On Page 4.

*Next Month: 2 Pages of Banquet Photos From Dave Kudley's Nikon.*

### MEETING & SPEAKER

**Monday, March 5 FCFF Meeting -- World Renowned Tim Borski, Speaker**  
Casting begins again at 6 p.m. Meeting at 7 at the Southpoint Marriott. This month we're bringing in one of the world's great fishing artists and fly tyers -- Tim Borski. Some of his more popular patterns include the Chernobyl Crab, Bonefish Slider, Critter Crab, Bonefish Critter, Craft Fur Shrimp, Swimming Shrimp, and Green Zima. Many of Borski's flies are now sold by Orvis, Bass Pro Shops, Cabela's, and fly shops. Come hear this world renowned tyer, but get there early. This will fill up quick.

### COMING EVENTS

**Saturday, March 10** -- Two outings are planned for this month. The first outing will be held on Saturday March 10 at **Sampson Lake**. Sign up and more information: Woody Huband VP Outings [Whuband@yahoo.net](mailto:Whuband@yahoo.net) or at the March meeting

**Saturday March 24 -- March outing number 2 -- Fishing The Mosquito Lagoon.** More information and sign-up sheets will be available at the meeting. See page 2 for Woody Huband's Updated Outing Schedule.

**Monday, April 2 FCFF meeting. Speaker: Capt. Warren Hinrichs.** Casting at 6. Board meets at 6. Meeting at 7. Warren's a local long-time member of FCFF who's gone on to win the prestigious Dell Brown Permit Tourney in Islamorado. He will talk about fishing Jacksonville, Mosquito Lagoon, and the Keys.

**Saturday, April 14 -- Jon Cave Casting Day** -- Come join us for our annual Jon Cave Day. 9:30 - 4 at M 7 M Dairy. Mark your calendar. Jon is one of the world's great casting/tying instructors and a great guy -- one of the fathers of FL saltwater fly fishing. The club will provide food. Clinic is free. Please sign up [dlambert@onwatermedia.com](mailto:dlambert@onwatermedia.com)

**Sunday, May 6 -- Come spend with fly tying great DL Goddard.** M & M Dairy. More info at March meeting

# FCFF 2007 OUTING SCHEDULE

Outings VP Woody Huband has worked diligently to bring this together. Give him an 'attaboy' when you get a chance.

We will try something a bit different this year. As usual, we'll have an announced outing each month, but we will offer an alternate outing for those who can't attend the regular outing. This will, in some cases, be boat specific or kayak specific. This schedule should enable everyone to have more time on the water with their FCFF fishing buddies.

February	Clapboard Creek low tide flats fishing (2/17/2007) Lunch at the Sand Dollar Restaurant - 11:00 AM (A1A ¼ mile north of Mayport Ferry Hecksher landing)
March	Samson Lake-Bedding Bass Mosquito Lagoon-Riverbreeze Park
April	Jon Cave Day - M & M Dairy (4/14/2007) Phosphate Pit Bass-White Springs
May	St Johns River bass & bream @ Lott's house (5/19/2007) Roanoke River NC stripers with Bud Larsen
June	Stuart tarpon and snook Rodman Reservoir bass
July	Devil's Elbow 206 Bridge Area Reds/Trout Lunch at South Beach Grill (Beachfront A1A at HWY 206)
August	Nassau Sound/Bird Island reds in the surf
September	Cedar Point reds in the grass
October	Palm Valley reds in the grass St Mary's River bass & bream float trip
November	Cumberland Island trout at McCulley's
December	Mill Cove flounder
January	North Florida striper fishing (site TBD) Phosphate pit bass

## Roanoke River Striper Trip Between May 1-21, 2007

### by Bud Larsen

Come join our small, but dedicated, group of striper lovers: Lee Hinrichs, Ted Mayhew, Chan Richey, Donn McKinnon, and Bud Larsen. We will fish for the stripers that ascend the Roanoke River 135 miles to assemble by the thousands at Roanoke Rapids and Weldon, NC, for their annual spawning ritual. We fish surface flies early and late and drag the bottom with sinking shooting heads in between, with time for an afternoon nap.

The exact dates will be determined later by the water temperature and release volume to coincide with the peak of the season. The law stipulates catch and release after May 1st. This restriction reduces the fishing congestion by at least 50%.

When conditions are right it's fast and furious action with 100 fish a day for two fly fishers an achievable outcome. We typically drift a four hundred yard section, then motor to the beginning and repeat the drift. Small boats and canoes with motors do well, but this run to the beginning, plus coping with the wake from bigger boats, could become tedious in a kayak.

More details will be provided in a handout at the March and April meetings. Call any of the "regulars" listed above for more first hand information.

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# A Slice of Borski

## World Class Tyer/Artist To Talk and Tie At March Meeting

by Steve Walburn

*(This article first appeared in Saltwater Fly Fishing. It has been excerpted with permission from Mid-Current.com)*

There was a time when Tim Borski was the last person you'd find prowling the remote Florida backcountry: As a kid growing up in central Wisconsin, he knew next to nothing about saltwater fishing, let alone fly fishing. But two decades after a chronic case of frostbite drove him south, Borski's distinctive wildlife art and highly effective saltwater fly patterns are synonymous with Florida fly fishing, particularly the no-motor zones of the Everglades.

Borski's contemporary paintings are collected by anglers and birding enthusiasts, and they are displayed in galleries from Key West to Japan. His prints and T-shirts are sold at select fly shops nationwide, and in 2006, Patagonia will release two new Borski Ts to support its Oceans as Wilderness Initiative. Five dollars from the sale of each shirt will go to the conservation group Bonefish and Tarpon Unlimited, of which Borski is a founding member.

The once winter-weary Polish kid who grew up chasing Wisconsin smallmouths with casting tackle now gives talks on saltwater fly fishing at the International Game Fish Association and other venues. He fishes as a "celebrity" on the Redbone circuit and at the tony Ocean Reef Club in Key Largo. His recently released instructional DVD series, "Borski Ties Flies," is the fitting oeuvre of a passionate fly tier and hardcore backcountry angler, whose personal story is as colorful as his paintings.

Back in 1983, Tim Borski was living in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, working full time in a factory and pursuing a bachelor's degree in fine arts. "It was the first sunny day after a long, long winter," he recalls. "I'd been down to the Wisconsin River that day and just crushed the smallies."

With visions of a repeat performance, he went home and greased up his Mitchell 306. Rising early the next morning, he coughed an excuse into the phone at his boss and grabbed his tackle. "Then I swung open the door, and there was nine inches of fresh snow on the ground," he says. "I freakin' snapped."

That same morning, Borski withdrew all his money from the bank. He called a friend to ask if he would watch over his cabin, telling him, "I'm flying to Florida tomorrow, and I'm either going to catch a bonefish or go broke trying."



Artist, Tyer Tim Borski

At age 23, Borski arrived in Miami with about \$1,500 — part of that a student loan. He had no more knowledge of bonefishing than what he'd read in magazines. But by a stroke of luck, he was able to engage the services of Bill Curtis, a pioneering Biscayne Bay guide who is now generally regarded as the originator of the poling platform. At the end of a long day (which included Curtis repeatedly snatching Borski's sunglasses off his nose and yelling, "Are those

things polarized?"), Borski finally landed a bonefish on a spinning rod. Regardless of having chummed it up with shrimp, he was ecstatic.

On the way back to his hotel, Borski stopped to get a six-pack. Walking back to his car in the parking lot, he pulled out his return ticket, took a good last look, and then ripped it up and threw it in the Dumpster. Tim got a job the next day at a local toy store. Three days later, he went to work for a Miami arts-and-crafts shop, where his boss happened to be married to Frank Oblak, a renowned light-tackle angler and fly tier. It was Oblak who first pointed Borski toward the Keys. "I started going down to the Seven Mile bridge to camp out and fish for tarpon with jigs. 1 became a tarpon junkie," says Borski, who began working 15-hour days so he could take four days off per week to fish. The art store also sold him discounted paints and supplies so he could continue painting.

When Tim expressed an interest in fly fishing, Oblak, who had thrown his back out fighting a huge tarpon, sold the young angler his personal tying vise. Borski also bought a cheap fly rod, and he taught himself to cast by taking target practice at the burrowing owls that bordered a nearby Miami soccer field. His notion was to catch one bonefish on a fly — just so he could say that he'd done it — and then sell the whole outfit to get his money back. But when that dream became a reality one spring day out on Sunshine Key, the notion quickly became an obsession.

Borski soon came up with his first commercial fly: a bonefish pattern featuring a grizzly-hackle tail and named, with classic Borski humor, Captain Korn's Grizzly Boner. In order to pursue his art and his angling without interruption, he took a job as a caretaker on Craig Key, a private island.

**Read Steve Walburn's complete article at MidCurrent.com -- [http://www.midcurrent.com/articles/people/walburn\\_borski.asp](http://www.midcurrent.com/articles/people/walburn_borski.asp)**

# The Sergeant Crab

by Bart Isaacs

I truly enjoy fly fishing the flooded grass flats for redfish in the late summer and fall.

Last Summer I had some success early-on with heavier crab patterns and spoons. However, as the floods continued later into the Fall, the fish seemed to have learned the routine and became much more sensitive to the plop of a heavily weighted fly.

I decided to create a pattern which was not heavily weighted, had a moderate sink rate, and would shed water quickly for casting. Instead of using weight to make the hook ride point up, I thought I'd "go with the flow" and take advantage of the hook down position. A hook point with wrap-around weedguard is used to "prop-up" the fly. I placed a small piece of lead wire under the to encourage the fly to sink and land with the eyes up. The extended prominent orange claw seems to make the fly stand at attention; hence the name Sergeant Crab. This pattern is meant to resemble the main prey of redfish feeding on the flat: *Uca Pugnax*, the Atlantic marsh fiddler crab.

When fishing the flooded grass, I observe the fish for direction of travel. If the fish seems to be slowly cruising or "lazy tailing," I lead the fish my cast, so that the fish will "find" the fly. If my cast is a little longer than needed, I drag it into an intersection position. When the fish approaches the fly, move the fly very slowly fly — the slower the better. The water is usually very clear on the flat and you will get a great response when the fish sees the fly. This has become one of my favorite flies for sight fishing reds on the grass flats. I also have had success with this fly in the back of creeks by making accurate casts to backing and even cruising fish.

## Materials

Hook: Mustad 34007 #2  
 Thread: Black Denier 210  
 Eyes: 20# Mason hard mono, black frosted glass beads for needlework projects coated with 5 minute epoxy to make round.  
 Shell/Body: Black Felt. Lead wire, either 0.025 or 0.035.  
 Claw: Orange Calf tail (kiptail)  
 Legs: Sili Legs Fire Tip; Black/Purple  
 Flash: Krystal flash, copper

**Step 1:** Start the thread on the hook and wrap it to the bend. Tie in weed-guard and wrap it deep into the bend to



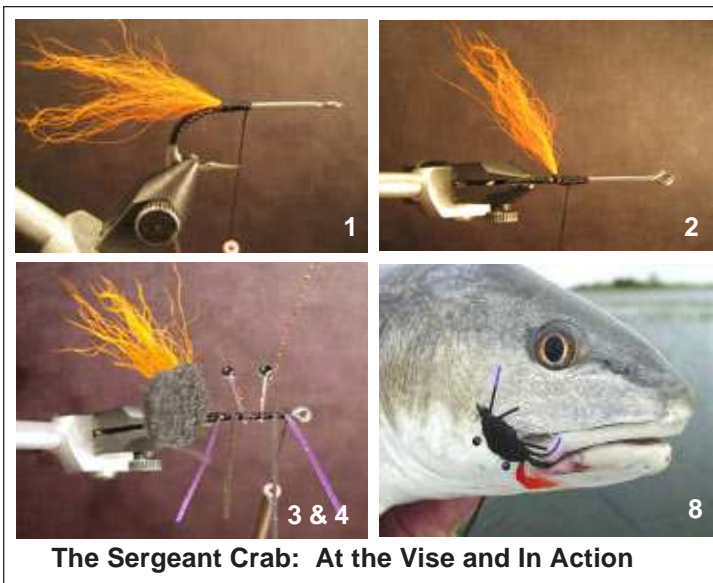
secure it to the hook and keep it in the same plane as the hook. Select a small clump of calf tail and tie it onto the top of the hook at the bend.

**Step 2:** Pull the calf tail away from you and wrap the thread and bobbin around the calf tail 3 to 4 times to form the large single claw.

**Step 3:** Cut the shell shape out of the felt. Note that the bottom of the shell is oval and the top comes to a rounded point. Tie it in on the back of the shank at the bend

of the hook just to the right of the claw. The shell will extend to the left so that it will be out of the way while tying the rest of the fly.

**Step 4:** I create the eyes separately by gluing a small glass black bead to the end of 20 pound hard mono then coat with 5 minute epoxy.



The Sergeant Crab: At the Vise and In Action

On the top of the shank, begin working from left to right and tie in a purple leg, a black leg, left eye stalk, two strands of copper Krystal flash as antennae, right eye stalk, black leg then purple leg. Next, pull the weed-guard through the eye of the hook and tie it off. Cut excess mono. Fold felt shell from left to right to cover the legs and eyes and tie it off. Whip finish.

**Step 5:** Rotate fly so that the hook point is up (underside of the crab shell is up with legs pointing away from you). Mix the

(continued on page 5)

# Flyfishing The Okefenokee

*“We found ourselves in a veritable fish bowl. . .with a strike every cast”*

By Jodi Slapcinsky & Dana Griffin, III

For T.S. Elliot, April was the cruelest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land, mixing memory and desire, stirring dull roots with spring rain

**Oh come on now!** With all due respect for the renowned poet, we beg to differ. If you are a fly fisher and can manage to make it to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge in extreme southern Georgia, you may just find that April should be a very kind month indeed. At least that would be our feeling based on a recent trip to the giant cypress swamp.

The Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1936 to preserve the 438,000 acre Okefenokee Swamp. This swamp remains one of the oldest, largest and most well preserved cypress-gum swamps in North America. So we had a lot of water to explore if we were so inclined. It turned out that we barely had to leave the boat ramp! We found ourselves in a veritable fish bowl, bracing for a strike on practically every cast. Most catches were in and around lily pads, but that wasn't always the rule.

And what a variety of species! Fliers were far and away the most common of the fish we caught. Neither of us bothered to make a count, but it surely surpassed 50 fish. And in between releasing fliers we found ourselves doing battle with humongous channel catfish, bowfins and chain pickerel. All of this action was concentrated in a period of about 4 hours, so to say we were busy is to slip into understatement.

The flies? Most fish caught were on sub-surface flies. Orange scuds worked very well for enticing fliers. Small streamers like white Arctic fox streamers and a modified Jack Gartside Rusty Sparrow pattern brought wrist jarring



strikes from channel cats, bowfins and pickerel. Slight movement of the fly or even a pickup of the line for re-casting often elicited hookups! This was a day to be savored.

For fly fishers residing in North Florida, the most direct route to the Okefenokee is by way of U.S. 441 north. At Fargo, GA follow the national wildlife refuge sign to the Steven Foster State Park. Here you'll find everything you need to get on the water and start fishing. There are fees to be paid. If you go, plan on paying an entrance fee, purchasing a one-day Georgia fishing license and a boat and motor rental fee. There are ways to get all of these fees waived. A Florida resident over 65 with the proper identification can fish the Georgia portion of the refuge without having to purchase a Georgia license. You can have the entrance fee waived if you have a Golden Age passport, which is a lifetime admission and discount pass for US residents who are age 62 or older. Those under 62 can buy a one day Georgia fishing license at the park. Lastly, if you bring your own boat, canoe or kayak, you can launch for free. Gasoline motors must not exceed 10 horse power.

**Continued From page 4**

5 minute epoxy and coat the hook shank so as to join the felt shell with the shank.

At this time, I place a small circle of lead between the middle black legs directly onto the shell. I form the loop ahead of time by wrapping lead wire around a small finish nail and clip off with finger nail clippers. I use 5 minute epoxy to hold the lead wire in place. I go back and coat the black thread that holds the weed-guard in place and the base of the orange claw with 5 minute epoxy for durability. Trim the rubber legs so that they are about 1/2 inch long.

Note that when complete with epoxy, the bottom of the shell should extend up a small amount



Top Left & Bottom Right: Robert Benardo and Bart Isaacs Kayak To reds in Clapboard. Top Right: Rick Palazzini With A Whipper or Striper (can't eill which!). Bottom Left: Palazzini Said This Guy Was The Only Fish-Catcher At Ernie's Pond Outing

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