

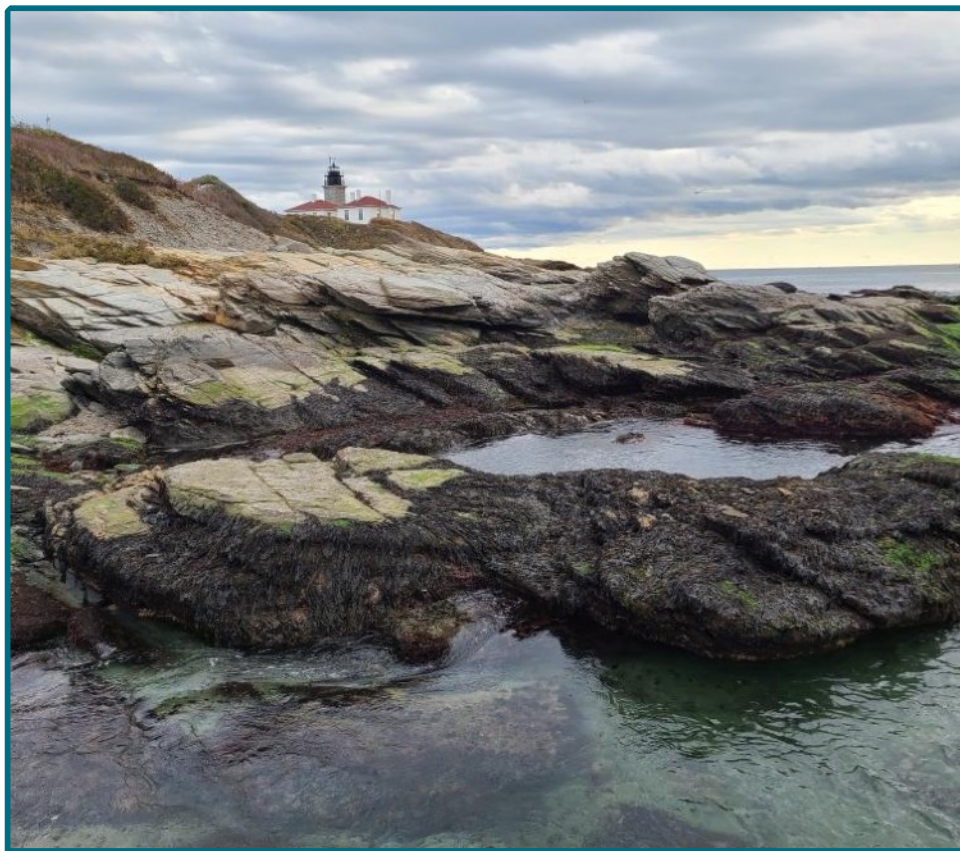


Rhody FLY RODDERS

America's Oldest Saltwater Fly Fishing Club

THE CURRENT

"The lifeline of the estuary and knowledge"















What is Luck and How to Increase it

The dictionary defines luck as success or failures brought about by chance rather than through one's own action, but I believe this definition is too simplistic...*continued on page 5.*

"Pass on to all, who ask, what you learn here"



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@Rhody_Fly_Rodders



It's the time of year we gain a minute or two each day heading toward spring. Every little minute of sunshine helps. Social scientist claim increasing sunlight leads to better mental health.

Capt. Jerry Sparks

I would like to say thank you to our January Presenter. There is no doubt Jerry catches fish year round under all conditions. His proudness and energy is infectious. His interesting sea stories had us all belly laughing. Additionally, Jerry donated hundreds of dollars' worth of fishing items to our bucket raffles.

Buckle Raffle Items

We are in a much better place now for raffle items, but we still seek your help. If you have any fly fishing materials hanging around, please consider a donation. It helps support our club and defrays any increased expenses.

Important Notice

We need a set-up person to run the monthly bucket raffle. No experience necessary. No outside work involved. Good people skills, able to chat up and motivate raffle sales. It takes a lot of effort to run a meeting. We are trying to spread the load so others can enjoy the meetings more. We appreciate the help we get. It doesn't go unnoticed.

Club Dues!

Membership dues are due. If you haven't already paid your dues, please do so. It supports so many wonderful club activities throughout the year. Dues are \$30.00 and can be paid at the monthly meeting or mailed to John Pope. John Pope, 6 Canonchet Drive, Portsmouth, RI 02871.

RISSA Northeast Fishing Show!

This all tackle fishing show takes place March 7, 8, and 9th at the Convention Center, Providence Rhode Island. Rhody Fly Rodders will not have a booth this year. We did have the charity flies at the Hartford Fly Fishing Expo. We were able to sell some flies and further our cause.

Capt. Ray Stachelek

Capt. Ray Stachelek



President
Rhody Fly Rodders

"We appreciate the help we get. It doesn't go unnoticed."

Preview



Tuesday, February 18th, 6:30pm

Riverside Sportsman Association
19 Mohawk Dr., East Providence, RI 02915



February Presentation: *The Rhody Road Trip*

Climb aboard the proverbial bus and enjoy learning the best early spring striped bass fishing spots in Upper Narragansett Bay from our President Capt. Ray Stachelek. This presentation is a great primer for early spring designed for those who wade. It's no secret that the best spring striper fishing begins in these estuaries. Estuaries are the first to support an abundance of new life like shrimp and mummichog. Besides estuaries, the upper bay contains rivers that support river herring. This presentation will provide overhead photography of these locations. This gives you a bird's eyes view of structure, shoals, sandbars, and drop off zones. All of these good fishing spots have public access and parking.

Ray Stachelek

Besides being the President of Rhody Fly Rodders, Capt. Ray Stachelek has been a licensed U.S.C.G Captain for 27 years, and operates Cast a Fly Charters full time since retiring from the educational field. He is an authoritative and recognized saltwater guide in Southern New England, and a professional fly tier. His patterns are featured in fly shops and catalogs around the nation, and his newest pattern, the squid-sicle, is now available. Ray is a member of the Umpqua Feather Merchants Signature Fly Designer Team. Besides tying flies and guiding, Ray shares articles and photography with fishing outlets.

Cast a Fly Charters is sponsored by Everglades Boats/Atlantic Boats Inc. and endorsed by Sage Fly Rods, Tibor Reels, Royal Wulff Fly Lines, Rio Fly Lines, Umpqua Feather Merchants/Metz Hackles, Hareline Dubbing, Dr. Slick Products, and Sprit River.

Directions

From Providence take Rt.195 to Exit 2B. Bear right on the ramp and follow Rt. 114 S for 2 miles. Look for WPRO Studios on the left, then take first U-turn back to Rt.114 north. Continue north and look for the Riverside Sportsman Club (blue) sign on the right.

What is Luck and How to Change it

The dictionary defines luck as success or failure brought about by chance rather than through one's own action, but I believe this definition is too simplistic. I think of luck as the way in which the millions of random events that take place at any given moment interact with each other, and the affect these interactions have on the future outcome. To be lucky is for these interactions to turn out in your favor, while to be unlucky is simply the opposite. Many of these interactions we cannot control, such as seals at our favorite spot, the differences in behavior between individual fish, or the biting fly that disrupts your perfect cast. However, we can limit the effects of unwanted events while increasing the chances of a positive outcome.

First, minimize the effect luck has by increasing your skills and knowledge. While this is not an overnight solution, this is the best way to overcome bad luck. By increasing your skills and knowledge, you will not need to rely on luck to succeed and can limit the negative effects random events may cause. No matter how skilled and knowledgeable you are, you should always be looking for ways to further increase your abilities. Some cheat codes you can use are sharpen your hooks, keep your rod tip low, and strip hard.

Second, when unlucky fish multiple flies. Fishing multiple flies allows you to increase the chance of a fish interacting with your fly. Casting two flies may also increase the chance of you becoming tangled, but you should have been increasing your skill to avoid this.

Third, move while you fish. Instead of relying on the fish finding you, move around and find the fish. To get the most out of moving as you fish, pay close attentions to the details of your surroundings as this will help you expand your knowledge.

Fourth, fish longer and more often. Fishing more and fishing longer will increase the odds that you encounter fish. Statistically, with infinite casts all outcomes must eventually happen. We cannot make an infinite number of casts, but the more we make, the more likely we are to succeed. To this end, do whatever gives you the most confidence. This will make you fish longer and not give up as easily.

Finally, fish with other people. Fishing with other people allows your new formed "Team" to cover more water, make more casts, fish more flies, and to make group decisions. Your teammate for the day can share knowledge with you and may be able to help you avoid making a bad choice. A guided trip exemplifies these benefits.

No matter what we do, luck will always remain part of our lives. We cannot control the million of independent events happening around us. We can only change our luck by minimizing the effect of untold events while maximizing our opportunities for positive outcomes.

By Patrick Williamson

Upclose

Paul Burmeister

Bristol, Rhode Island

How long have you been a member?

Since April 2024.

Favorite flies?

A pink-and-yellow Clouser in 2/0 or 1/0

Favorite places to fish?

The Cow Yard in North Chatham, Mill Gut in Colt State Park, Lower Mountain Fork River in Oklahoma, Trout River in Prince Edward Island, and the Pecos River in New Mexico.

Boat or shore fishing?

Both: I have a 21' center console in Chatham, but it's hard to beat sight-fishing the beaches and flats.

How long have you been fly fishing and tying flies?

When I retired in March 2023, I decided to start fly-fishing again after a 50-year hiatus. Since retiring, I've fished in seven states and two Canadian provinces.

Any notable catches?

Best fish so far is a 32" striper on the flats on the bay side of the Cape. Most unusual catch is the Snake River cutthroat I caught in the Lower Mountain Fork in SE Oklahoma.

Favorite species to catch?

Stripers and brook trout

Favorite fishing partner?

Jon Avery, a RFF member and a friend and neighbor in Bristol; My children and grandchildren

Any notable stories?

As a kid, I was fascinated by brook trout but never caught one. In September 2023, my wife and I went to Prince Edward Island. While there, I fished the Trout River and finally realized my nearly 60-year-old dream of catching my first brook trout -- which just happened to be a 19" monster! At college in upstate New York, I was leaving my fraternity about 4:00 AM on the first morning of trout season with my gear and crossed paths with a "stoner" brother who was stumbling in the front door, reeking of "herb" after a long night. He squinted at me and asked where I was going. Totally amped up, I replied, "It's the first day of trout season! The ice is out at Salmon Creek in Lansing! I've been waiting for this day all winter!" My sky-high friend looked at me for a few seconds and said, "Oh, man, you are so f***ed up..." 6



Book of the Month:

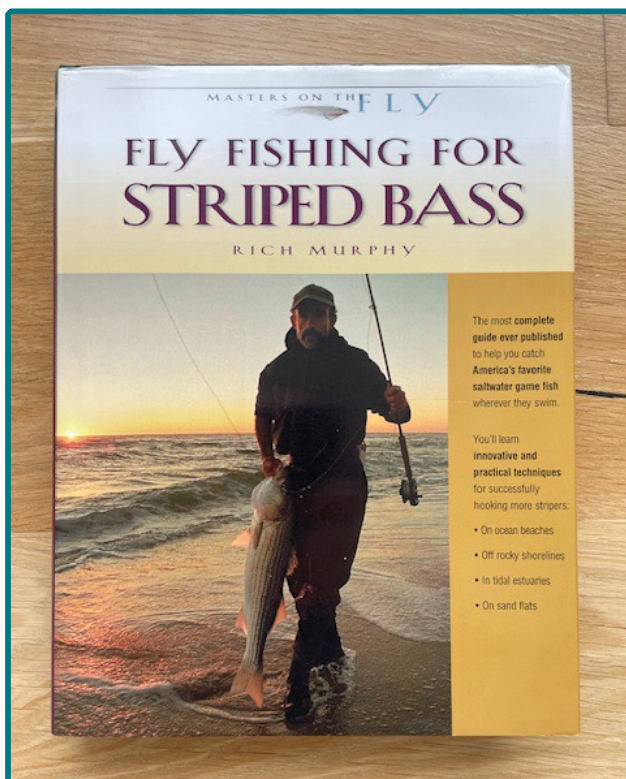
Fly Fishing for Striped Bass by Rich Murphy



If there was a college course Strippers on the Fly 101, *Fly Fishing for Striped Bass* by Rich Murphy would be the text book. Sure, other books would also be on the mandatory reading list, but Murphy's book would be the core course material. *Fly Fishing for Striped Bass* is the most complete, well edited, and factually accurate book on how to catch striped bass on a fly rod. This book is not focused on one niche, technique, or geographic area and does not rely on outdated information from the 1990's and before. Instead, it has a broad impact.

Information dense and more nuts and bolts than many other fly fishing books, this book is first and foremost a learning tool and reference for those wishing to improve their fly fishing experience. If I am not having the results I want in the marsh, on the

beach, or rock hopping the cliffs, I will often turn to this book and reread the pertinent sections to refresh my tactics. These three examples are just a few of the many topics addressed in this 1.5 inch thick book.



Those who are critical of this work point to the extensive details as if they are a flaw. These critics are missing the point. This book is supposed to be detailed and text book like. Unfortunately, these same individuals will point to some of the more recent books on the market, which are poorly edited, contain pure opinions and falsehoods presented as scientific fact, and are little more than a series of spot and guide highlights as a better alternative. I believe they are mistaken.

Hollow Semper Fleye



This fly is fun to tie and is very effective. This fly is tied using the hollow tie method in step 2-4. You can learn this technique on YouTube or in *Fleye Design* by Bob Popovic.

- 1) Attach your thread near the bend and add a clump of bucktail followed by some flash. Advance your thread 1/4 of the way up the hook.
- 2) Attach with a hollow tie the same amount of bucktail as step 1. Make sure it spreads 360 degrees around the shank. Veil the hollow tie with the thinnest hackles you can find followed by flash. Advance your thread another 1/4 of the way up.
- 3) Repeat step two. Keep in mind good taper and be sure to get the bucktail 360 degrees around the shank. Advance your thread to the final tie in point about 1/8 of an inch behind the hook eye.
- 4) Attach with a hollow tie 1.5x the amount of bucktail you did in the last step. Whip finish and add some super glue to the thread. Let the glue dry.
- 5) Run the fly under the sink and hang it 2-4 times. It should dry into a tapered shape.

Materials



3/0-5/0 standard



Mono thread



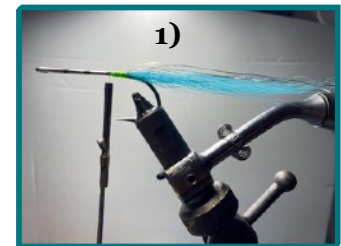
Any color bucktail



Thin hackle feathers



Any flash material



Spotlight: Fort Wetherill State Park

This section is meant to highlight well known fishing spots in order to provide information to new saltwater fly fishermen. The intention is to provide basic information without providing specifics that could be considered a spot burn.

Fort Wetherill State Park is located along the rocky cliffs of Jamestown, RI directly across the East Passage from Fort Adams. While parking is ample and free, the **cliffs make shoreline access difficult** for all but those in good physical condition without mobility issues. **A mistake here can be fatal** and waders should not be worn on the cliffs. For some, the risk associated with these cliffs is not worth it, but for others like bait fishermen seeking tautog and scup, or the fly fisherman looking for **blitzes off the beaten track**, this spot is worth a daily pilgrimage.

Learning to navigate the overgrown trails and the hand and foot holds to reach some of the rocky outcroppings takes a few trips, but once mastered, an angler will find themselves casting into water ranging from 6 to 36 feet deep. Your casts will be directly along the route bait must take to leave the bay every fall. **The combination of depth, the structure, and bait draws predators in.** Atlantic mackerel, chub mackerel, bonito, albies, bluefish, striped bass, sea bass, tautog, fluke, scup, and numerous species of sharks make up the list of predators I have seen at Fort Wetherill in the past two years.

For those who are not put off by rock scrambling while holding onto a fly rod, the reward can be quite good. **Fish typically push bait up against the rocks and right into your feet.** The cold clear water makes for a very visual experience. Its common to see the fish explode onto your fly from the depths, but **the best time to fish is also the most dangerous.** Storms with high on shore wind and rain in the fall can really make this Fort come to life. While some may blind cast here, I typically drive through looking for signs of fish on my way to other spots. If I see bait and fish I will stop, but if not I will continue heading southwest towards Narragansett.

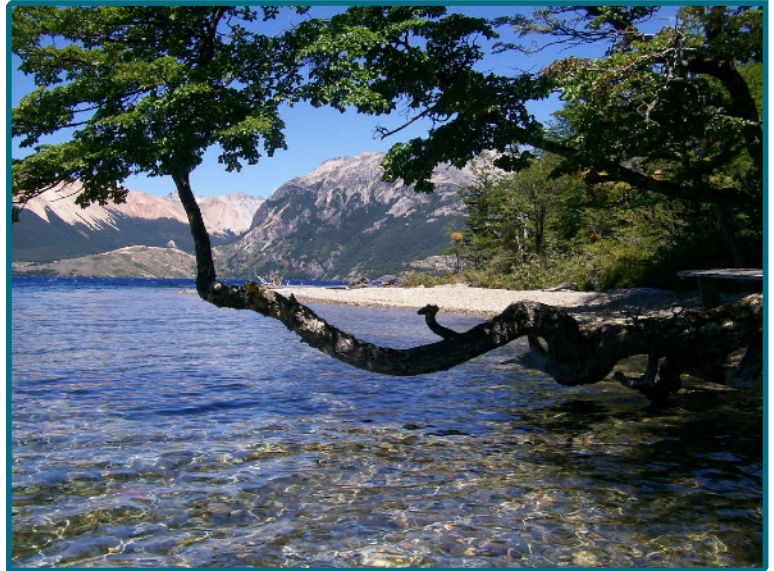
January

February, 2025



A Memorable Story: The Improbable in Patagonia

In the 1970s author Bruce Chatwin falls from a horse in Chubut Province and is delivered by a gaucho to the health station in the very small village of Rio Pico. There Chatwin is attended to by an emigre from Soviet Russia, a woman distinctive as she is missing both her legs. Forty years later I find myself in the most congenial company of Rio Pico fishing guide Mario R. and discover that he is, improbably, the adopted son of the good doctor.



A year later ex-patriate, Justin, has me sipping yerba mate with a ninety year old man, born, as was his father, on the remote land that he works with his wife and certain of their nineteen children. This as a prelude to fishing water there so isolated that it seems, improbably, to have no name.



Later we are camping on one shore of the immense Lago Vintter, far from the nearest hamlet even, yet entertained for dinner by an elderly couple living off the grid in what had been a gaucho hut. We toast all manner of things with homemade vodka and depart the next day.



How improbable is that? I've now visited Argentina's deep south twelve times and discovered that brown trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout are improbably large there, often in the range of 25-30". The Argentine outback is a special place in so many ways. I must return.



Destination: Charleston, South Carolina

FEBRUARY, 2025

Charleston, South Carolina, the Newport of the south, is known more for its bachelorette parties, historical tours, and dining than fly fishing. However, redfish are plentiful on the oyster reefs and in the marsh. While many would not go here for a pure fly fishing trip, Charleston is worth suggesting as a family trip or trip with your partner because it offers attractive non-fishing activities in addition to productive fly fishing.

Difficulty of Travel: 3

Physical Demand: 2

Fishing: 3

Price: 4

Accommodations: 3

Family Rating: 5

Remoteness: 1

Safety: 4



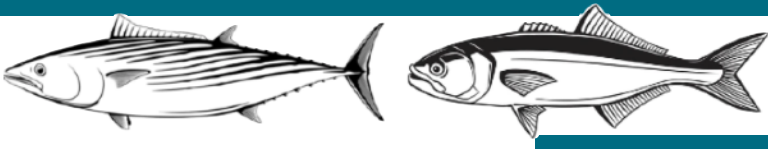
Fishing here is visual and targeted towards redfish or tarpon, although tarpon are only around one or two months per year. On flood tides the redfish will move into the grass up on the marsh and you will be casting to tailing fish. When the tide recedes you will be casting to fish over oyster beds in the winding creeks within the marsh.

Guide prices here are a bit on the expensive side, but Florida pricing is beginning to become the norm everywhere. Expect to pay \$700-\$800 for a full day of fishing. I suggest booking two 3/4 or 1/2 days if you can swing it. This will help prevent a difficult weather day from killing your trip.

Travel to Charleston is easy. You can fly down, but would need to rent a car or take an uber to the the boat ramp on your fishing days. If you are up for a road trip, the best bet is to make the drive south on I-95.

Charleston has all the luxuries of any tourist city. Accommodations and dining are available for any budget. In addition, the city and surrounding area offer activities for all ages and interests. Consider this more of a compromise trip. You get to to go fishing one or two of the days and the rest of the time you spend with the family.





What's New?

Umpqua has put out its [new flies for 2025](#). While most are freshwater patterns, there are some interesting new flies on the market this year. Even if you are a die hard tier who never purchases flies, it is well worth it to [head over to the Umpqua website to check out their new patterns for some inspiration](#).



What's Worthless?

There are multiple options one should look into before purchasing [pre-made crab and shrimp eyes](#). Like many things in our sport, pre-made crustacean eyes [are almost always over priced](#), but unlike that \$1,000 fly rod you own (also something you should have considered not purchasing), [most tiers have the material on hand to make their own crustacean eyes](#). By using old leader material, a lighter, and some optional epoxy or marker, you can have a pretty nice set of crustacean eyes in a few minutes. There is nothing wrong with the store bought eyes, but it is a few extra bucks you could be spending on something else instead.

What's Worth It?

[Jig hooks](#) for Clousers, Half and Half, and other flies that ride the bottom are worth it. Although these hooks are slightly more expensive than their traditional counterparts, [jig hooks ensure a fly rides hook point up](#) with some additional benefits. The shape of these hooks is [less prone to collect weeds, snag on objects, and increases the jigging motion](#). Moreover, this shape and the consistent “hook point up” orientation seems to help prevent deep hook sets in the gills. Tying a fly on a jig hook is the same as tying on a normal hook, but you need to account for the bent shank when placing the dumbbell eyes. My personal preference is to set the eyes slightly further back than normal to ensure my whip finish is before the angled shank.

Fly Fishing The Rips

Rips are formed by water moving over subsurface obstructions. On the SoCo Rhode Island coast, the obstructions are reefs formed of moraine, the rocky residue left behind as the glacier covering our area receded thousands of years ago. Up current of the obstruction, the sea surface is typically flat. The obstruction causes the water to speed up and become more turbulent as it is constricted and then burbles and flows over the obstruction. On the surface, that burbling appears as a ripline. With heightened current flow, the ripline will be bounded by flat water on the up current side and a series of waves anywhere from one to five or six feet high on the down current side. Bait gets caught up in the rip and becomes easy prey for the predators that patrol the ripline from below. Most folks fish the rips by stemming the tide up current of the ripline and casting parallel to the ripline. That allows the fly to drift naturally toward the rip. When the fly reaches the ripline, the angler strips line to cause the fly to slide across the face of the rip. When a fish is hooked, the engine is put in neutral so that the boat and angler can drift back into the rip with the current, and thus the angler does not have to fight both the fish and the current. There are times when bass or blues will be feeding in the flat water ahead of the ripline, and there are other occasions when the predators will be feeding well back into the rip. Keep a sharp eye out for signs of active feeding, and be sure that your presentation appears to drift naturally into the feeding zone.

In May and June (and sometimes into July), the primary forage is squid. These are not small squid; they are often ten to twelve inches long, some even bigger. Squid hold deeper in the water column during bright daylight, then rise toward the surface in low light conditions. Cast fast sinking lines with shorter leaders during the day, and intermediate and floating flylines for dawn, dusk and night fishing. By June, over-slot stripers have arrived, and a 9 or 10 weight rod becomes preferable. Prime times to fish are dusk and dawn when surface or near surface flies on a floating line work well. July and August bring a mix of bait. Adult bunker (Atlantic menhaden) arrive, as well as snapper bluefish that can be mimicked with big flies, like the *Beast Fly*, on fast sinking lines. But there's also a variety of smaller baits such as spearing, silversides, sandeels, juvenile butterfish and such that can be mimicked with smaller offerings cast on 8 or 9 weight rods.

By September, peanut bunker (juvenile menhaden) and bay anchovies (rainbait) have dropped out of the coastal rivers and estuaries and spread out along the coast. Besides striped bass and bluefish, Atlantic bonito and false albacore show up in the rips to gorge on these plentiful smaller baits. In addition, around Labor Day, there is often an invasion of small squid, best represented by three to five inch flies. Starting in mid-October, there is a noticeable change: Schools of mullet and peanut bunker will be found within just a few yards of dry sand. Rips formed at breachways and rocky points along the shore (think Quonnie and Weekapaug Breachways or Watch Hill Light and Napatree Point) become more productive than the rips formed by the offshore reefs. By November, schools of migrating bass are feeding tight to the beach, not out on the reefs.

Volunteer Opportunities

Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association Fresh Water Tying Classes:

February 25, March 4, March 25, and April 1 (weather date 4/8), 3:30 to 5:00 pm

Contact Jeff Perry for more information

Cross Mills Library Fresh Water Tying Class:

March 20, 6:00 to 7:30 pm

Contact Jeff Perry for more information

Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association Scouts (BSA) of America Fly Fishing Merit Badge:

April 15, WPWA, April 17 Carolina Trout Hatchery (weather date April 19)

Contact Jeff Perry for more information

RIDEMARE Program: Contact Ed Lombardo for more information

Kids Day, An Introduction to Fly Fishing 101

Addieville East Farm

April 19 9:00 am to 2:30 pm

Adult Fly Fishing Program /for Beginners and Intermediate

Addieville East Farm

May 17, 9:00 am to 2:30 pm

Dare to Dream Ranch & Warwick Veterans Association Veterans Fly Fishing Program

Deer Creek Farm

June 7, 9:00 am to 2:30 pm

The Famous Hexagenia Limbata Hatch Classes:

Camp E - Hun - Tee PI, Arcadia Management Area

June 12, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Women Only Fly Fishing School

The Carolina Trout Hatchery

June 21, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Saltwater Fly Fishing School for Adults

The Narrow River, Sprague Bridge

September 27, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm



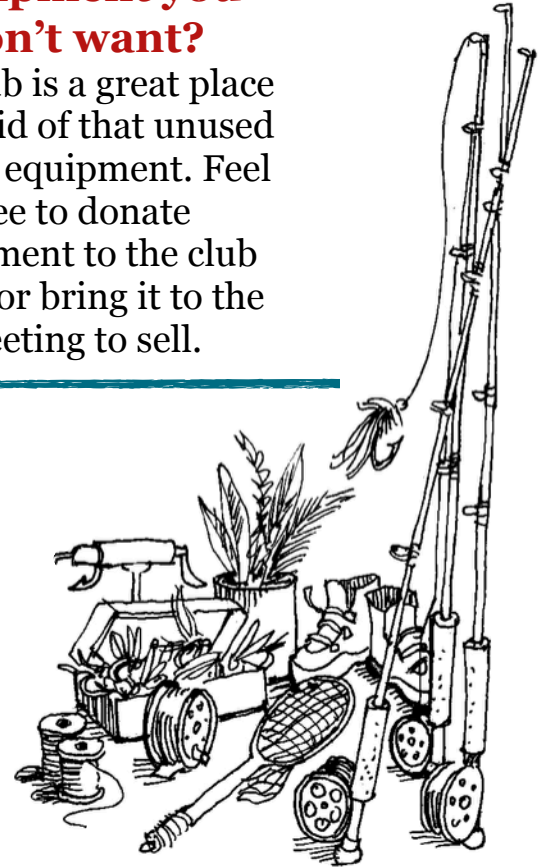
We Need Your Help!

Did you read a good fishing book or go on a trip somewhere? Do you want to share your knowledge of a **well known** spot with members new to the area or new to fly fishing? How about just some pictures of the fish you catch? ***U dun't hav 2 worry about gramma or speling***, we can fix it! Let us know and we will include it in the next issue.

Contact the newsletter team:
Rhodyflyrodder.newsletter@gmail.com

Do you have unused fishing equipment you don't want?

Our club is a great place to get rid of that unused fishing equipment. Feel free to donate equipment to the club raffle, or bring it to the meeting to sell.



Officers and Board

President:

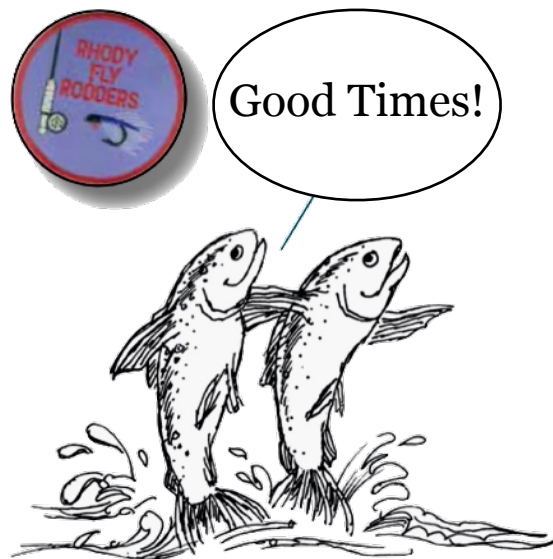
Capt. Ray Stachelek
 401-884-3794
castaflycharters@cox.net

Secretary/Treasurer:

John Pope
jpope@johnspopecpa.com

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