



Rhody FLY RODDERS

America's Oldest Saltwater Fly Fishing Club

THE CURRENT

"The lifeline of the estuary and knowledge"



Summer Edition

Our second issue of our 2026 Summer Edition is now out. Thank you to everyone who contributed photos, ideas, and feedback. Please send in photos and material for the August Issue.

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



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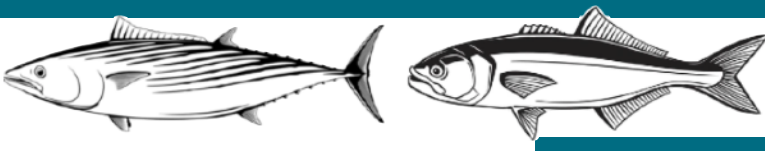
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Summer Edition

Spring was fun. We experienced bigger stripers than normal albeit less fish. Those who were very successful this spring had to work for their success. They were dedicated to their craft. They often fished early mornings before most of us woke up or late at night when we were sleeping. They had a plan and executed it. They read the water and used the tides to their advantage. Most importantly, they increased their odds by using knowledge and skill. This allowed them to be successful.



Rhody Fly Rodder Happenings

Jeff Perry needs volunteers to help with the Scouting Fly Fishing Merit Badge Program. Volunteers will serve as mentors to help teach fly tying, casting, and will help their mentees catch a fish and earn the merit badge during the field test. Jeff helps us a ton. Lets return the favor.

The **RFR Website** has an expanded fly library. Anyone can submit flies to be added. Please email Ray or the newsletter email to do so. Additionally, we are taking steps to speed up the website. This will likely involve switching hosts which will upgrade the infrastructure behind the site. This will be a minor expense estimated at \$200-\$300. This fee will become the new website annual fee and replace the old fee.

Many members are looking for **fishing partners** for upcoming trips to the Cape, Block Island, or to just go out on their boats with them in the Fall. If you are interested in fishing with a fellow RFR member this fall please let us know.

Our **fishing outings** are done until the fall. Stay tuned for the start up of the fall fishing outings.

Mackerel have inundated Block Island and there are some bluefish around out there too. If you can get out there, this is a good time to go as you likely wouldn't be fishing otherwise.

What Makes a Fish a Fish?

There are over 34,000 known species of fish on earth making fish the largest group of vertebrates, but what makes a fish a fish?

First most fish are vertebrates meaning they have the four characteristics all vertebrates share, but not *every* fish is. “Wait... most fish?” Yes, but let's first understand what makes a vertebrate a vertebrate. The four vertebrate characteristics are: vertebrae column (does not have to be bone like ours), an internal skeleton of some kind, a cranium (skull of some sort), and a neural crest which is a group of cells in the embryo that become many of our sensory features and nervous system. Most fish share all these characteristics. An exception is the hagfish which lacks a vertebrae column. Instead they only have a notochord which all vertebrates also have (it's inside your spine). Thus we typically say a requirement to be a fish is a cranium or a notochord in order to allow hagfish in the group too. “Why are hagfish in the group if they are different?” Well, they have the other characteristics that make a fish a fish and are more anatomically and genetically similar to fish than any other group.

“But fluffy my rabbit is a vertebrate too.” Fluffy is not a fish. “So, what makes a vertebrate a fish and not a rabbit?” Fish have gills. There are numerous types of gills and we may cover respiration in an entire article. Yes, lung fish exist too, but they still have gills. Fluffy does not have gills, so your rabbit is not a fish.

“Well some salamanders have gills and are vertebrates!” Yes, and to be fair fish and salamanders share more in common than you think. But to be a fish you cannot have limbs with true digits (fingers). The appendages of a fish are strictly fins. Now, fins and appendages are very similar. In a future fish evolution article I will explain that fish fins have a direct link to appendages in land animals. However, there are differences between fins and the appendages of land species at an anatomical level. Thus, your arm is not a fin even if you want it to be.

There is one other key characteristic that defines a fish. Fish eggs and embryos do not have a feature called an amnion. Amphibians are the only other group to share this trait. An amnion is a fluid filled layer that acts like a Space Suit for the embryo. It protects the embryo from the harsh outside world. Fish embryos lack this. Thus, fish are called anamniotic. Surprisingly, even fish that do not lay eggs and are live bearers are anamniotic. We will go deeper into fish reproduction in another article.

So fish have fins, a cranium, all have a notochord (so all of them are chordates), most are vertebrates, they have gills, and they lay eggs or give live birth without an amnion. Not too bad once you strip away most of the scientific jargon.

June

JULY, 2026



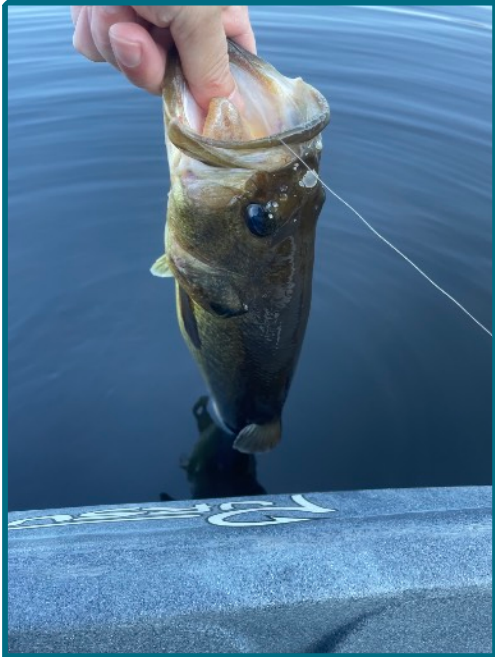
From Left to Right,: Ray Stachelek with a fat striper, Ed Lombardo hooked up in the rain, Dennis with a bright striper, Capt. Cooper with a gator blue, Susan Estabrook with a massive striper.

June

JULY, 2026



Summer Largemouth Setup



There is no need to have a specific rod for largemouth bass. A 6-8wt is perfect, but a 5wt can work fine too. I use a 7'11" 6wt that has a fighting butt. This size rod is easier to use in a kayak, can double as a trout rod, and can be use for stripers too - which it excels at. The rod I have is a Ross FlyStick Lite.

There is no need to have a specific or fancy reel for largemouth bass. Like with trout, the reel is only there to store line. Because of this, I use my trout reel which is a cheap 2006 Orvis Clearwater. When it was bought, it was \$48. Since then I picked up a few more spools for this reel. I use two spools to hold my bass lines. What can be a bit iffy is when I use this same setup for carp fishing, but so far it has been fine.

For line, I like to stick to floating lines, but I have a sinking tip line too. I don't like picking lake gunk off my flies constantly, so I fish top water flies 99% of the time. I still catch enough fish, and I think fishing the surface for bass is more fun. The line needs to match or be one wt higher than the rod. A shooting taper helps with bulky flies, but is not required. Unless you use this setup for carp, you will never see your backing - even if you hook a pike, so just go with cheap 20lb Dacron or whatever you have around. I typically stick to 3x-ox leaders, but I'm not picky. I have used random old leaders from the salt, trout fishing, and straight 20lb mono with success. I try to stick to 6-7ft leaders for bass. The short leader helps land fish in a kayak and also turn over bulky flies with a lighter rod. But, like stated above, I will use whatever I have.

For flies, I use mostly foam flies that are easy to tie. Gurglers, foam divers, foam frogs, foam mice, and anything else that pops or disturbs the surfaces will work. Tie your own. You only need cheap bait holder hooks, craft foam from Michaels, bucktail, and a feather to palmer under the foam. Silicone legs help, but are not necessary.

You do not need a kayak or canoe, but it helps. Any kayak is an advantage, but one you can transport easily and can stand on when fishing is a bonus. This is where I get fancy. I have a 2015 NuCanoe Pursuit with a bow mounted trolling motor. What makes my setup ideal is my trolling motor has spot lock, has auto pilot to move along a shoreline, and is controlled by a remote I wear around my neck. I can cruise the shoreline with autopilot creating my own drift to pick cast along weed beds or use spot lock to hold my self at the perfect angle to cast at docks.

Staying Safe This Summer

As part of the Summer Edition we plan to have a small article on staying safe and healthy in the newsletter each month.

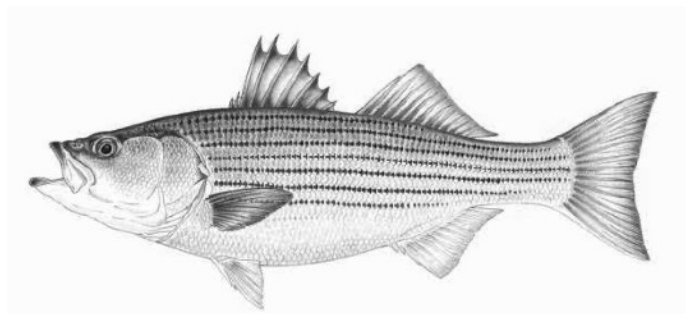
How to Remove a Fly From Your Arm

For a superficial hook in the arm, first wash your hands if possible and clean the area with clean water. If the barb has not penetrated the skin, the hook can often be backed out carefully. If the barb is embedded, there are two commonly used removal methods:

- **String-yank method:** Wrap a strong piece of string around the bend of the hook. Press down on the shank of the hook to disengage the barb from the tissue, then give the string a quick, firm pull parallel to the skin. This works best for single hooks that are only lightly embedded.
- **Through-and-cut method:** If the barb is well embedded and the hook can be safely advanced, push the point of the hook forward until the barb emerges through the skin. Using wire cutters or side cutters strong enough to cut the hook, snip off the barb. Then back the remaining smooth portion of the hook out through the original entry wound. **Do not use this method if advancing the hook could damage nerves, tendons, blood vessels, or other important structures.**

After the hook is removed, wash the wound thoroughly with soap and clean water. Apply gentle pressure if it is bleeding, then use an antiseptic and cover the wound with a clean bandage. Monitor the wound over the next several days for increasing redness, swelling, warmth, drainage, or fever, which may indicate infection.

Finally, make sure your tetanus vaccination is current. Seek medical attention if you cannot remove the hook completely, if the wound is deep or heavily contaminated, if you have numbness or difficulty moving the limb, or if signs of infection develop.



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.

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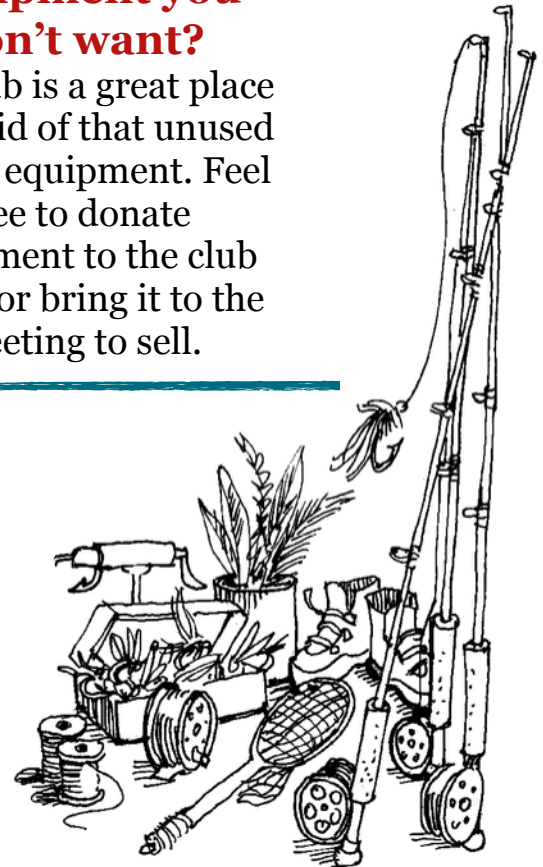
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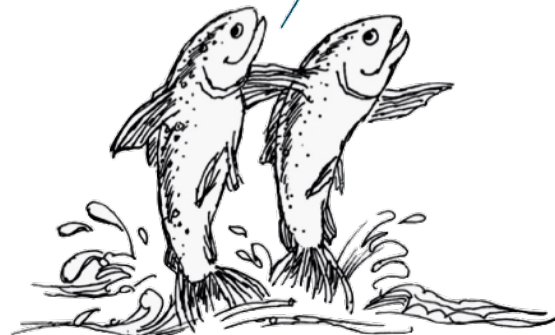
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Do you have unused fishing equipment you don't want?

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.



Good Times!



Artwork by: **Peter Nilsen**