



America's Oldest Saltwater Fly Fishing Club

THE CURRENT

"The lifeline of the estuary and knowledge"



Welcome Back!

It's a great time of the year! The Fall Run is in full swing and out indoor meetings are back!

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



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Follow Us On Instagram!

@Rhody_Fly_Rodders



Welcome back!

It's our 63rd year in existence. If that sounds old, we are not. Our club destination continues to evolve and change with the times. Not standing on our laurels, we continue to redefine our mission each year to further stimulate more club interest, energy and future growth.

Acknowledging Those Who Give Back

We are proud of our members who have helped out and administered charitable, educational, and community events this past year for the many organizations they are involved in. Rhody members provided seminars on fly tying, fly fishing, and more! The experiences provided to others, have made many warm memories.

Club Elections

The October meeting is "primary day". Anyone planning to run for club office should make it known at the October Meeting, but you have up until the November vote to announce you are running. You have a chance to make an impact on the club. We are always looking for new voices and ideas to support the interest and growth of this organization. November's Meeting is Election Night. This ensures a higher attendance rate than the holiday season. Eligible members must be in good standing with dues paid.

Bucket Raffles

Special thanks to Jeff Perry, and Jim Jaques for their recent contributions to our club's bucket raffle. Both members receive gifts from friends and were willing to donate this merchandise to our club. We gain substantial revenue from these raffles. The proceeds off-set some of our hall rental and presenter cost. Raise a pint to Jeff Perry and Jim Jaques for their generous donations. Hear! Hear!

Capt. Ray Stachelek

Capt. Ray Stachelek



President
Rhody Fly Rodders

Preview



Tuesday, April 20, 6:00pm
Riverside Sportsman Association
19 Mohawk Dr., East Providence, RI 02915



Pizza Night and Fly Tying!

Our first meeting of the year is always Pizza Night! It's a nice social way of welcoming everybody back. Caserta Pizzeria has been a benchmark in Rhode Island for almost 75 years. Some say it's the best pizza around. Federal Hill is our own little slice of Italy. Caserta's slogan is if you are not eating Caserta's, you are not eating pizza. Bring your appetites.

We have gained many new members over the summer. To help us all meet each other, we wanted to add an activity to this meeting that would help bolster conversation. We would like to encourage members to bring fly tying equipment, and tie flies during this meeting. **You will need to bring your vice, materials for whatever you plan to tie, and tools.** If you do not tie, feel free to watch and talk to those who are.

Club Elections

Anyone planning to run for club office should make it known at the October Meeting.

Officers include treasurer, board members, vice president, and president. Board members have various tasks including the newsletter, being in charge of fishing events, and more.

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.



Hats are on sale!

A Letter to the Environmental Police Officers From Mark Ellis

Chief Hoxsie,

My name is Mark Ellis. I have been an avid recreational saltwater fisherman throughout the Northeast for approximately 63 years, and I currently serve on the Board of Rhody Fly Rodders.

Rhody Fly Rodders is a long-established Rhode Island fly-fishing organization whose members include experienced recreational anglers, guides, fly tiers, educators, and conservation-minded fishermen. The organization is active in angler education, charitable efforts, and promoting responsible fishing practices.

I am reaching out because I, along with a number of friends and fellow RFR members who spend considerable time fishing from boats throughout Rhode Island waters, continue to witness repeated and sometimes blatant violations of marine fisheries regulations. These violations are particularly concerning to us when they involve striped bass, given the importance of protecting this fishery and ensuring compliance with Rhode Island's harvest, size, possession, and handling regulations.

We are also seeing what appears to be increasingly coordinated activity on the water. One example we have observed involves multiple fishermen operating from jet skis and repeatedly shuttling between fishing areas and larger "mother" boats. The manner in which some of this activity is being conducted raises serious questions about compliance with possession limits and other fisheries regulations.

I want to emphasize that my interest is not simply in identifying violations after they occur. As a lifelong angler, and with the support of Rhody Fly Rodders, I would like to work constructively with your Division on ways the recreational fishing community can assist Rhode Island DEM Law Enforcement.

I would very much appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss what we are seeing on the water and to review several practical, easily implementable ideas that we believe could improve compliance and enforcement. We also believe these measures would receive broad support from responsible recreational anglers as well as members of Rhode Island's commercial fishing community.

Our objective is straightforward: better protection of Rhode Island's fisheries while making it easier for responsible fishermen to help your officers identify and address serious violations. Please let me know if you would be available to meet. I would be happy to come to your office or meet at whatever location is most convenient for you.

Thank you for your time and for the work your Division does protecting Rhode Island's marine resources.

Best regards,
Mark Ellis

Bendback Weedless Baby Blue



This fly was designed to fish flats and inlets where weeds and bottom slime are prevalent. The fly resembles a baby bluefish or other medium-sized baitfish, and it moves beautifully through the water.

- 1) Tie in a thread base starting an eye's width behind the eye and ending at the beginning of the bend-back.
- 2) Cut a medium bunch of white bucktail and cut it to about 2 to 2 1/2 hook lengths. Tie it in on top of the hook shank.
- 3) Invert the hook and cut a similar-sized bunch of the blue-grey bucktail. Tie it in on the opposite side of the hook shank as the white fiber.
- 4) Select two grizzly hackle feathers slightly longer than the bucktail and tie them in Deceiver-style.
- 5) Select 10 to 14 peacock herl, about as long as the hackle feathers, and tie them in at the same point as the other materials. Tie in (with very tight wraps) a piece of 60# monofilament tippet, using the "curl" of the tippet to line it up with the hook point.
- 6) Whip finish and use UV Epoxy to coat the head.

Materials



Ahrex PR358 CA Bendback



Black thread



Blue and White Bucktail



Grizzly Hackle

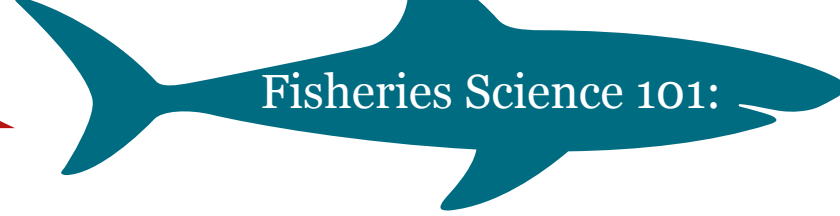


#60 Mono (Weed Guard)



Stick on eyes





Too Many Fish to Catch

Welcome back to Fisheries Science 101. Thus far we have covered what makes a fish a fish and looked into the evolution of fish. Today we will take a 30,000 foot view of fish taxonomy. Our end goal is to appreciate the different groups of living fish.

There are too many species of fish to catch in one lifetime, and we continue to discover more each year. Currently there are over 37,700 confirmed species of fish. There are more species of fish than reptiles, mammals, birds, and amphibians combined. This shouldn't be too surprising as we know from last month that fish have been evolving on this planet far longer than those other groups.

In order to better wrap our brains around the incredible diversity, we organize the species into taxonomic groups based on how they relate to each other. To be clear this is not fish specific. We organize all organisms into a tiered “upside down pyramid” taxonomic classification system. The largest tier can contain millions of species and the smallest tier is the individual species (sometimes even sub-species). Lets pick up the pace. We begin at the largest taxonomic group which is Kingdom. Fish are all in the Animal Kingdom (not the Disney Park). The next tier is phylum. Fish are in the Chordata (chordate in latin) phylum, particularly the Sub-Phylum Vertebrata (vertebrates). At this point fish and non-fish are still grouped together. However, moving further down the ladder from here is where we begin to enter the fish specific groupings.

We are now stepping down to the next tier which is called Class. Class can sometimes be split into Super Class and Class. Three Super Classes, Chondrichthyes, Osteichthyes, and Agnatha exist for fish. Do you remember these? Chondrichthyes are our cartilaginous fish and Agnatha are our jawless fish. We won't focus further on these two as sharks and rays will each have their own article and for our purposes jawless fish are only important for their evolutionary existence. Osteichthyes are the bony fish, and the majority of the fish species fall into this super class. We break this Super Class into Actinopterygii, our rayed fin fish, and Sarcopterygii, our lobe finned fish. We are going to focus on rayed fin fish in honor of our RFR president Ray. So far we have added latin, but everything above you already know from past articles.

After Class, the next tier down is Order. Here is where we get weird. There are over 40 orders of just rayed fin fish. That is way too many to ever be relevant for our purposes. At this point, we break from the traditional taxonomic methods and bundle our rayed fin fish classes into just three groups for us to remember, the upper teleost, non-teleost, and lower teleosts. **This is where you should start paying attention!**

The non-teleosts are awesome, but mostly extinct. The remaining non teleosts are mostly Sturgeon, paddlefish, gars, and bowfins. These are ancient fish where the jaw is fused to the skull. They lack suction feeding unlike a bass. The skin typically has heavily armored bony scales, and the vertebrate column ...*Continued next page*



Too Many Fish to Catch Continued

...continues into the tail fin (caudal fin) slightly making them somewhat less agile but super strong. If you ever dealt with an adult Atlantic sturgeon you will know they can leap from the water and can cause serious injury. I have seen one break someones wrist when being maneuvered from gill net into a landing sling for sampling. Being slapped by the tail out of water can cause a concussion or broken ribs. I once had a 3-week tail shaped bruise on my chest from a 200 lb adult who slapped me through a thick life jacket, yet they get much bigger.

The lower teleosts are plentiful. Good examples are trout and salmon. They are advanced bony fish, but represent the early baseline teleost design. The top jaw has a hinge that allows it to move slightly forward and eat larger prey, the fins have softer rays and are positioned lower on the body, and the vertebrae stops right at the base of the tail which gives balanced speed and power. A tell tail sign of a lower teleost is an adipose fin. We will get into fins soon, but hold onto that word for now. Tarpon are one of the most primitive lower teleosts and are pretty special, but we will get into that later as well. Upper teleosts are more advanced. Striped bass, tuna, albies, bonito, and mahi are examples of upper teleosts. Upper teleost have advanced jaws. When a striped bass opens its mouth to eat your fly, the entire jaw protrudes out and creates a large suction force. Stripers can suck in prey from inches away. Trout cannot do this as effectively. A bowfin cannot do this at all. As we all know, the hit and timing of the hook set is different between these species. The jaw anatomy is why. This anatomy is one reason they are grouped differently. Upper teleosts typically have multiple dorsal fins (the fins on their backs), and often these fins are highly specialized. A striped bass has rigid spines in its dorsal fin to protect itself. A tuna can tuck its rigid fin down into its back to become more hydrodynamic and has numerous dorsal finlets to limit turbulence. Besides this, upper teleost have higher pectoral fins (the fins on the sides). This allows increased maneuverability. The swim bladder anatomy is also different, but this is a whole article on itself. Ever squeeze a trout and hear air escape? This doesn't happen with a bonito. Finally the scales are different. Upper teleosts have advanced scales which help with hydrodynamics and can be more armored where lower teleosts have simpler scales that sometimes seem like they aren't even there. Filleting and upper teleost is typically harder to get the point of the knife into the skin versus a lower teleost.

Below Order we have 3 more groups. From most inclusive to least inclusive these are Family, Genus, and Species. Although these last three taxonomic groups exist, we won't cover them. Instead we just need to know they exist to follow along with examples in subsequent articles. The point is there are many species of fish with diverse anatomy, but we can still find common features to understand the behavior or anatomy of these animals by grouping them taxonomically.

You made it through more science and possibly learned latin. Next month our series will begin to cover morphology (body shapes, mouth positions, and fin types) and how that impacts fishing.

September

OCTOBER, 2026



A Memorable Story: The Gaspésian

If you were born on the Gaspé peninsula of Quebec and lived more than seven decades in proximity to some of the most legendary salmon rivers in North America, would you say there's a chance that you'd have gravitated to fly fishing? "My father took me fishing when I was four, recounts Jacques Fugere. "He told me it was the worst thing he ever did. After that, all I wanted to do was fish. I was always saying 'Another five minutes! Just another five minutes!'" When he was 12, he began fly fishing and when he was 18, he was introduced to salmon fishing by his mentor, Mr. Albert Arsenaux. Shortly after he began tying his own salmon flies. He recalls, "They weren't pretty, but they caught fish!" He practiced and bought some books to see how others tied flies, but in the end he found he did better inventing his own patterns. "I'm always curious," he says, "I try to see what they're eating and whether they're down deep, in the middle of the water column, or on top. I fish a slow-sinking line with short leaders – four feet. If the fly is good, I'll make another one."



Early on in his salmon fishing career, Jacques built a fly rod, a 4-weight carbon-fiber rod 6 1/2 feet long. His mentor laughed at him: "What did you build that for? What can you catch on that?" One day he hooked a massive salmon on that diminutive rod – after an hour and 25 minutes he landed the 25-pound fish. Inevitably, Jacques gravitated to guiding. He has worked all across

Canada (except British Columbia) and fished and guided on most of the famous Gaspé rivers, but his favorite is the Bonaventure. It's close to his home in New Carlisle, and he has access to it whereas fishing on many of the Gaspé rivers is restricted to members and guests of exclusive clubs. The

Bonaventure is where he landed his largest salmon, a 35-pounder. "The water is gin-clear. I've had clients step out of the canoe four feet from shore and sink over their heads – they think they can wade, but the water is 12 feet deep! There's a ledge you can see clearly even though the water there is 40 feet deep." The Grand Cascapedia and Little Cascapedia Rivers are favorites as well, although access is restricted by the clubs that own the water rights.

A Memorable Story: The Gaspésian

In the past ten years, the striped bass population has exploded in Chaleur Bay (the Gaspé is on the north shore, with New Brunswick on the south shore) as it has in New Brunswick and the other Maritime Provinces. They've even appeared in the rivers that empty into the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the north shore of the Gaspé. "They eat everything – salmon smolt, lobsters, anything they can find," complains Jacques. "There are strict regulations on the size and number of fish you can keep – why? I believe they're destroying the salmon fishery." Hard for us Southern New Englanders to imagine too many stripers being a problem!

If the photos included here appeal to you, contact me (Paul Burmeister – pburm@comcast.net) and we'll contact Jacques together for you to specify what flies you'd like him to tie. Pricing depends on the type of materials required – there is a shop in Rimouski, on the north shore of the Gaspé, where Jacques can source much of what he needs, but the cost of hooks and materials (like everything else) keeps climbing.



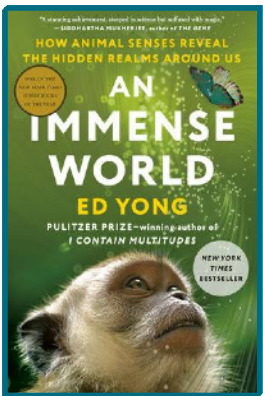
Book of the Month:

An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us

By Ed Yong



An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us is exactly what the title describes. This book explains how different animals, including some types of fish, use their senses and perceive the world in a vastly different way than we do. While the book is not directly fishing related, the contents can be used to think about how the fish we target may be perceiving their environment and how they may react to different flies and conditions.



What I like about this book is that it challenges the reader to think about things that are almost impossible for humans to perceive such as colors we do not see, sounds we cannot hear, vibrations we cannot feel, and many other naturally occurring phenomena that we cannot perceive but fish and animals do. The book is structured in a way that it dives into each sense, including ones we do not have like electromagnetic fields, and gives examples of animals that have these senses and use these senses. What a reader may not like about this book is it is dense and at times can be scientific.

Particularly understanding vision, sound, and vibration in water is key to understanding why one fly or technique may work better than another. Surprisingly, you will find many things you think matter do not while other elements matter more than you may have ever thought. However, you will have to connect the dots for yourself. This book will describe senses and how certain species use them. Not every animal has every sense. Not every animal uses the sense we have for the things we do. This is a beginners deep dive into the world of sensory biology and an introduction to how to think about what an animal may be perceiving. To get the most out of this book you will need to comprehend what the author writes and then apply it to how you think about fishing.

Tech-Bro Goes Fishing

My experience with fishing guides in Patagonia, spanning 25 years, has been uniformly excellent. They want you to have a memorable experience and are well prepared to make that happen. Their territory is blessed with salmonids and they know where to be, when to be there, and what to do. The trout fishing is outstanding. Food is very good to great and accompanied by fine wines not exported to the North. Add genuine camaraderie and you might already be calculating how to return.



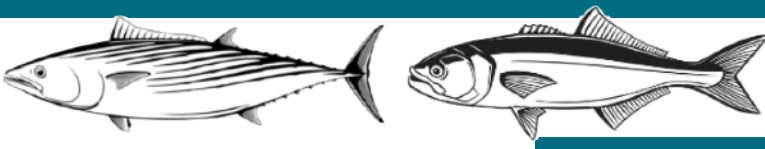
Conversing with your guide can be informative, insightful, and downright entertaining. In the course of twelve visits to Argentina I've learned a lot just chatting with my guides. Visiting Tierra del Fuego in 2024, our guide was a well known figure and congenial enough that I felt comfortable asking if he'd had any unusual experiences with clients. He shared the following.

Via some intermediary our man was asked if he might guide the most well-known, billionaire tech-bro on planet earth. Tech-bro resides in the US and after departing Harvard University he established today's most widely used social media site. Everything is arranged. We were surprised to learn that the uber-client had an interest in fly fishing for trout. The real surprise is how the experience played out.

Day one the guide is at the airport servicing Ushuaia at 8:00AM. A large helicopter arrives and disgorges the client and an entourage of attendants. All are whisked away in rugged vehicles and tech-bro is turned loose with a fly rod and the guide. Brown trout are caught. Four hours later it's over. There is no day two. The client is a very busy dude. He picks up the tab for an extraordinary catered lunch; then all but the guide climb into the helicopter and disappear into the sky.

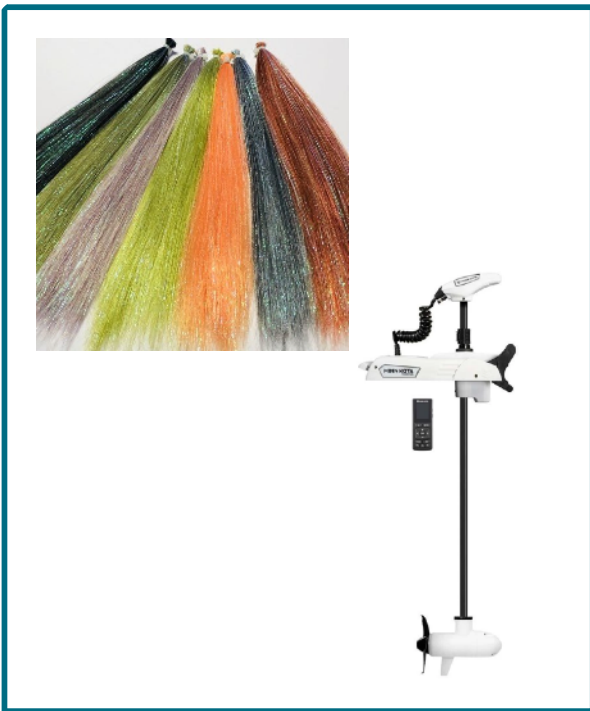
Forget business class on Delta and the Aereolinas Argentinas internal flight from Buenos Aires to Tierra del Fuego. Tech-bro no doubt selected a suitable conveyance from his fleet to enter and leave the capitol. The whirly-bird may have been a rental.

Tech-bro goes fishing as far south on any earthly continent as one can go for four hours. Did he tip well? I did not ask.



What's New?

Flekta Fusion is a new synthetic fiber for fly tying. Usually, I'm not super intrigued by new synthetics, but this looks exactly like DNA Holo-Fusion which were discontinued a decade back. If it is, that's awesome, because DNA fibers made great candies, sand eels, and accents in larger flies. At \$10 per pack the price is steep, but everything is expensive now. You can get a pack of Flekta Fusion anywhere Hairline products are sold.



What's Worthless?

Using light rods because it is “sporting” is stupid. It requires intentional ignorance to not realize that lighter gear equates to longer fight time. Longer fight time is not good for the fish! We are on the precipice of a striper stock collapse, yet fishermen are bragging about catching stripers on a 5wt and a trout reel. We can all do that too if we want to fight a 30 inch fish for 20 minutes. If you are fighting a striper for even five minutes, it better be 50 pounds or in heavy current, otherwise you have no fish fighting skill. It's not fair chase to waste a resource. Use the right size tackle and learn to land fish quickly!

What's Worth It?

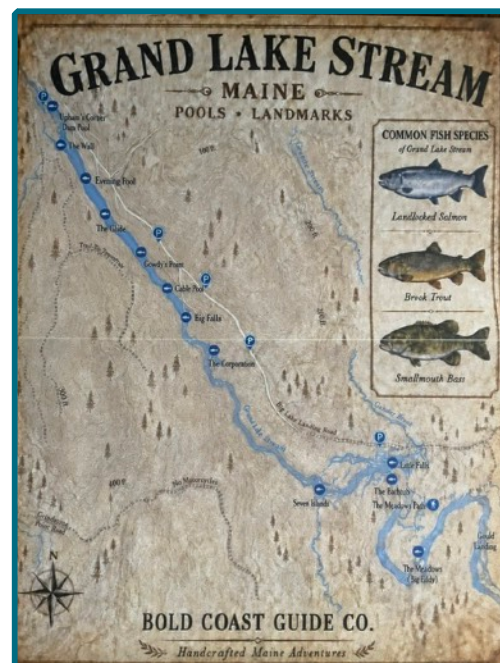
Trolling Motors with spot lock and autopilot will change the way you fish for the better. There are now multiple companies who make motors with these or similar features. I personally like autopilot for working a shore line slowly. The key here is to move into the current or wind to have better control of your speed and prevent the boat from spinning. When you encounter a spot you like you can use spot lock to work the entire feature. Some autopilot features now can even follow a contour line or keep you on a preset or previous track. This is perfect if you know where you want to be at any stage of the tide. If its low tide, hit your low tide track and fish the edge of the sand bar, if its high tide select your high tide track and move slowly along the bar looking for cruising fish. Either way your hands will be free to cast.



Destination: Grand Lake Stream

OCTOBER, 2026

Grand Lake Stream is one of only four native watersheds in Maine that has indigenous land lock salmon. Flowing three miles between West Grand Lake and Big Lake, its clear water, deep pools, and pocket water has defined New England fly fishing for over a century and a half. The state officially designated Grand Lake Stream as fly fishing only in 1903 and the river hosts one of the most significant hatcheries in the North East. Specifically the West Grand strain of landlocked salmon grown here, with indigenous land lock salmon eggs from the fish in the river, are nearly taxonomically and genetically identical to sea run Atlantic salmon. This hatchery supplies nearly 200,000 of these eggs to hatcheries throughout the northeast who then stock landlocked salmon in states as far south as NJ.



The towns economy started focusing solely on sporting camps in 1898. Since then famous lodges such as Wetherby's Resort, Leen's Lodge, and Grand Lake Lodge have hosted thousands of anglers including baseball hall of famer Ted Williams and Buffalo Bob Smith, the creator and host of the *Howdy Doody* show. There is no shortage of good lodges to stay in and the logging roads nearby make great places to pitch a tent.



Besides the history and lodging, the river is beautiful and fishes very well in spring and late fall. Land Lock Salmon can be notoriously picky some days yet an angler can easily catch a dozen or more when the bite is on. These fish jump like their sea run cousins, but are typically much smaller. Most salmon caught in this river will be 16-22 inches, but some may reach 26 inches.

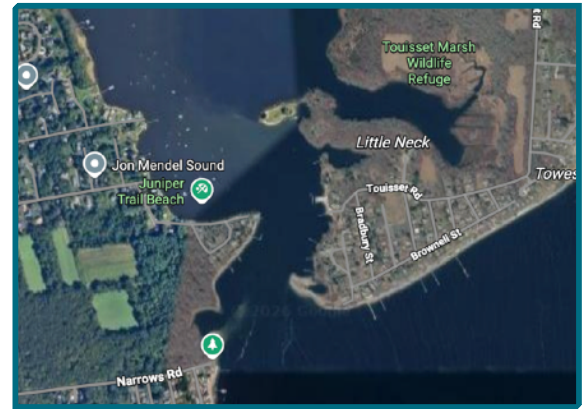
This river can be very crowded but is worth a trip due to the scenery and history. A weekend here can only set you back as little as \$100 (gas being the biggest expense) if you camp and do not get a guide. The river is easily navigable and I was able to catch a few salmon and many fallfish in late September without a guide by swinging and stripping leach patterns in the less popular holes. All in all, this is a great place to enjoy fly fishing history, catch some salmon, stay in a cabin, or camp in the back woods, on a budget.

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Spotlight: Bristol Narrows

This section is meant to highlight well known fishing spots in order to provide information to new saltwater fly fishermen.

A well known and productive spot in the upper East Bay Area is the Bristol Narrows. The Bristol Narrows is where the Kickimuit River empties into Mount Hope Bay. The tide from Mount Hope Bay and the current from the river converge in this narrow opening squeezing a large volume of water over a sand bar and into or out of a small river. This faster water disorients and traps bait from the Kickimuit River estuary and stripers from the bay patrol the area looking for an easy meal.



Both sides of the Bristol Narrows are fishable, but the west side is much easier to fish and access. To fish the west side, you park at the very end of Narrows Road, where there is public parking and a fishing access site. To fish the eastern side, you must find parking near Touisset Point and locate a right of way, find a willing homeowner whose property you can cross, or stay below the high tide line and wade down from the marsh. Good luck with that, but I have seen it done.



Sticking to the west side, you will likely find bait fishermen near the parking area, but you will be able to wade the bar and find casting room if you move north towards the river. The drop off here is steep, but if you know your footing or stay no more than knee deep, this can be an excellent night fishing spot. You want to target the first few hours of the dropping tide here, but rising tides can also be productive. The key is to fish the current and retrieve the fly to the edge of the drop off.

Alternatively, you can swing the fly until it is over the edge and hold on for a bite. Both methods will produce. The best part of this spot is it is very close to several other decent spots that you can check if the Narrows are not producing. Most of those spots you will need to find for yourself.



2026-2027 Auction Donations and Financial Contributors

We would like to honor those who have graciously contributed financially or donated items of value to our club. Below are individuals who made significant contributions to our club in the last 18 months. Additionally, we would like to extend our gratitude to the many individuals who donated items or made financial contributions prior to the last 18 months who may not be listed here.

Platinum (\$200+ or equivalent value)

Ken Copper

Bob Signorello - Auction Items

Robert Walsh and his wife, Mary McGratten Estate, trustee Jeff Perry - Raffle Items

Silver (\$100+ or equivalent value)

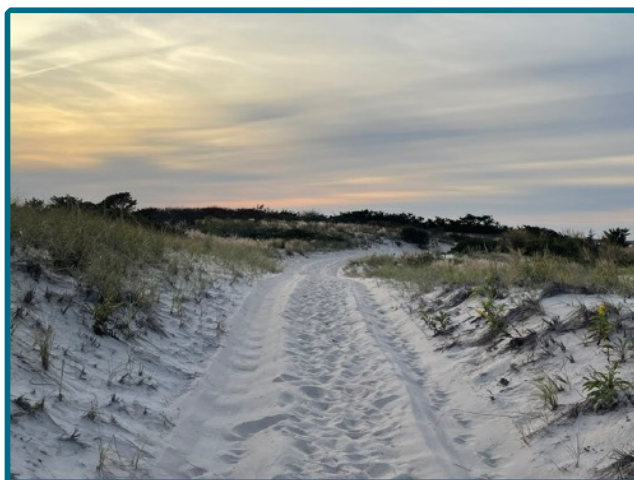
Jonathan Juhase - Raffle/Auction Items

Dr. Henry Levin Estate, trustee Jim Jaques - Auction Items

Keld Olson - Auction Item

Bronze (\$50.00+ or equivalent value)

Mark Ellis - Name Tags



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, or bring it to the meeting to sell.



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

Officers and Board

President:

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John Pope
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Vice President:

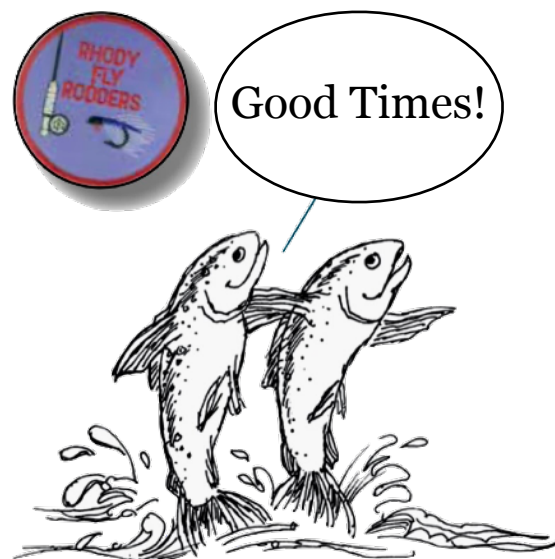
Paul Burmeister

Directors:

Jon Avery
Mark Ellis
Susan Estabrook
Gary Menard
Patrick Williamson

Where Did Our Members Fish Last Month?

Rhode Island
Massachusetts
Maine
New Jersey
Maryland
California
Connecticut
Pennsylvania
.... and More!



Artwork by: **Peter Nilsen**