

# The Fly Line

Monthly Newsletter of the North Louisiana Fly Fishers

April 2016

Volume 2, Issue 4



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## April Meeting Topic

Dick Burton, one of Louisiana's top fly tyers, will give a presentation on bass and bream fishing in the Atchafalaya Basin. The bayous in the basin are beautiful. I have always wanted to kayak fish down there but didn't know where to go. After Dick's visit to our club this month, I hope to be armed with plenty of information to plan a trip!

Dick is from the Baton Rouge area and regularly fishes the basin. His knowledge of the area, the species available to catch, what to catch them on and when to go will add to our fishing knowledge of our Sportsman's Paradise. Dick will even tie some of his



go to flies during the social hour before our meeting.

So make plans to come early and stay late. Opportunities like this don't come around too often. 🐟



**Dues are due immediately! Don't miss out on upcoming events. Remember, we accept cash, check and credit cards. Thank you!**

**Please make a note of our new address:**

**North Louisiana Fly Fishers  
PO Box 29531  
Shreveport, LA 71149**

## March Meeting Recap

Well the March meeting had very few attendees. Mother Nature saw to that. The flooding was horrible and the roads were almost impassable, although a few hard core souls made it out to the refuge. Our make-up meeting (a week later) wasn't much better, although not because of the weather. People just had other plans previous to the cancellation of the original meeting.

For those that did venture out during the storm, Don Lawler gave a sneak peak of the full presentation that was given during the


make-up meeting. "Creative Fly Tying - Materials of Opportunity" was very informative and entertaining. I'm not going to give away any details as Don will be giving his presentation at the Caddo Conclave (see ad next page).

Don's program will show you how to scavenge materials from unlikely sources such as dollar stores to tie some truly unique, but very fishable, flies.

As I said previously, this is very informative and very entertaining to say the least. Envision a "flip-flop fly" or "crepe paper popper"

or some such creation. Seriously though, think of all the materials that you could find there. Fur, feathers, thread, wire, and as Don will probably show us, some unconventional materials also.

So come prepared to take notes and have some fun. You may just learn something that you could use at next year's mystery fly tying contest.

The way time flies, "Chili & Flies 2017" will be here before you know it! 

### 2016 NLFF Executive Board

President	Steve Oliver	318-349-6411	sdoliver012@gmail.com
Treasurer	Tom Bullock	318-393-7729	twbullock@aol.com
Secretary	TBD		
A/V & Technical	Steve Oliver	318-349-6411	sdoliver012@gmail.com
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Member at Large	Thomas (Bud) Bethea	318-464-5104	thomasbethea@hotmail.com
Member at Large	Brett Rowell	318-207-6097	brett@brownbuilders.com
Member at Large	Vacant		

**Special Event - April 8th and 9th**

# **Caddo Conclave 2016**

***Located on beautiful Caddo Lake near  
Karnack Texas at Caddo Lake State Park***

**April 8 & 9**

**Registration \$10 per person, maximum \$20 per family**

**Friday: Doors open at 5:00 p.m.. Pot Luck Supper!  
Bring enough for you and one other family.**

**Saturday: Breakfast provided by North Louisiana Fly  
Fishers at 8:00 a.m.**

**Speakers throughout the day  
Bring your fly tying equipment!  
Lunch provided by East Texas Fly Fishers**

**Plenty of fishing available on bayou at Caddo Lake State Park  
Feel free to camp, rent a cabin, or commute to the event**

**Caddo Lake State Park 903-679-3351  
For more info contact ETFF Mike Hawkins 903-736-1887  
Or NLFF Scott Irwin 318-742-2190**



## 2016 "Spring Thaw"

The North Louisiana Fly Fishers will be holding our "Spring Thaw" on April 30th. This annual event features good times, good fishing, and good food. This year it will be held at Judy and Johnny Thomas's property in Plain Dealing north of Bossier City. Gathering will start at around 10:00 am with the fishers arriving around daybreak.

On the agenda this year is a BBQ picnic. This is a very similar

format to the "Frozen Chosen". The club will provide the main course and drinks. We ask each attendee to bring a side dish. Lunch will be served at 1:00 pm.

For those that wish to fish, there is a 3-acre pond on site that has bream, bass, crappie, and catfish. So bring your gear and fish before lunch, eat and then BS with everyone!

The location is 28 miles north of I-

220 and Benton Rd.

From the intersection of I-220 and LA-3/Benton Rd, head North for 16.5 miles.

Turn Right onto LA-160 East for 6.9 miles.

In 4.2 miles, turn Right onto Demoss Rd.

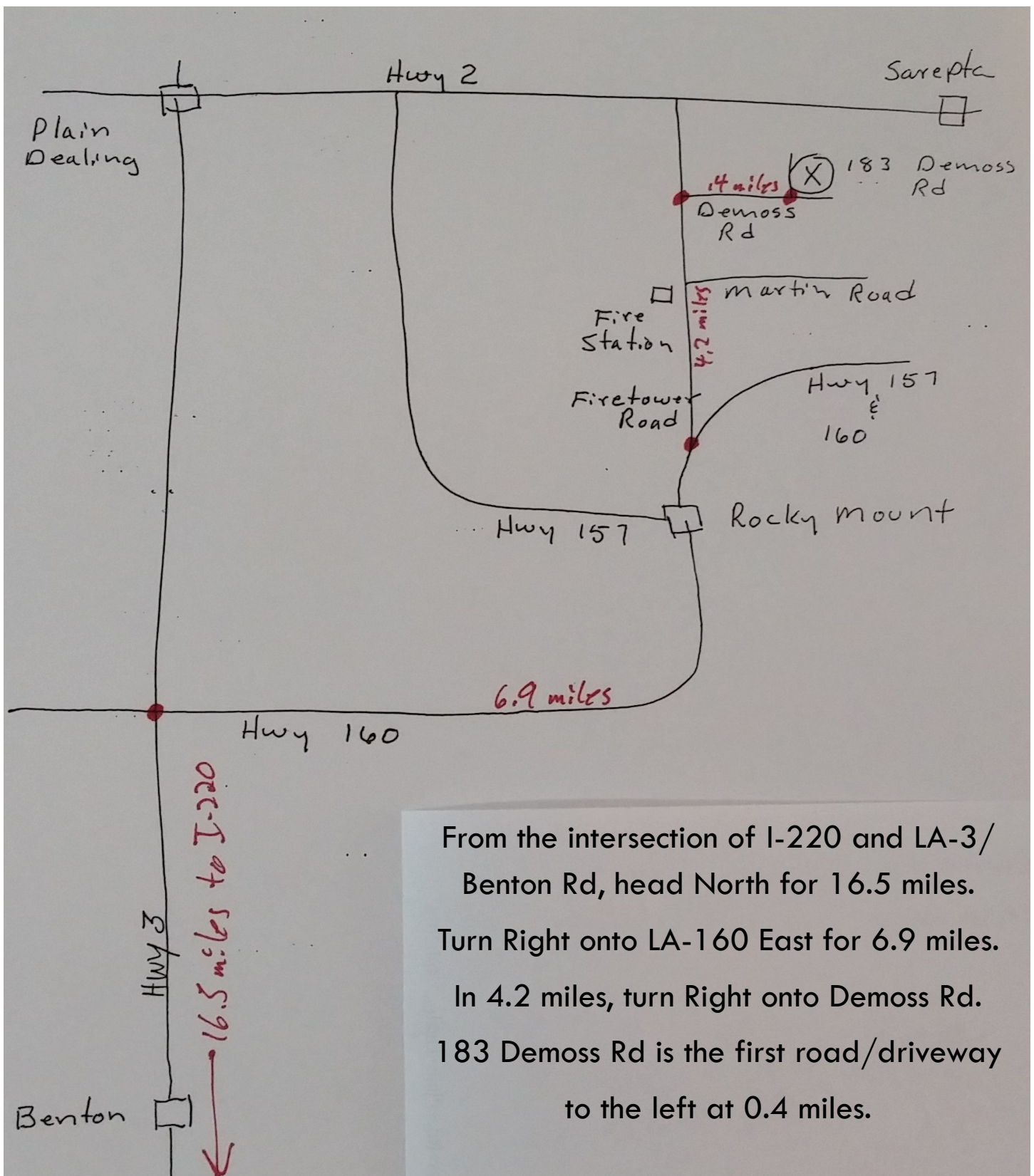
183 Demoss Rd is the first driveway to the left at 0.4 miles.



Artwork by Dave Whitlock



## 2016 "Spring" Thaw Directions



From the intersection of I-220 and LA-3/  
Benton Rd, head North for 16.5 miles.

Turn Right onto LA-160 East for 6.9 miles.

In 4.2 miles, turn Right onto Demoss Rd.

183 Demoss Rd is the first road/driveway

to the left at 0.4 miles.



## The Right Rod

Before we get into the gory details, let's answer one question. What is the function of a fly rod? While the answer may be overly simplistic, let's break it down into three parts- casting, line control and hooking/landing a fish.

The rod allows for the line to be cast with power and accuracy and thus with good casting skills, allows for the fly and line to be presented properly so as not to spook your quarry. Once your fly is in/on the water, the rod allows for control of the line that is out of the water. The fly rod must be strong and flexible enough to bend, sometimes under great pressure, to set the hook and allow the fisher to fight and land the fish

without breaking the rod.

So which rod/rods should you buy? If you are buying your first rod for fly fishing, see my recommendations in the side-bar article.



Even so, you should read this article through as it will give you some insights into why I made those recommendations.

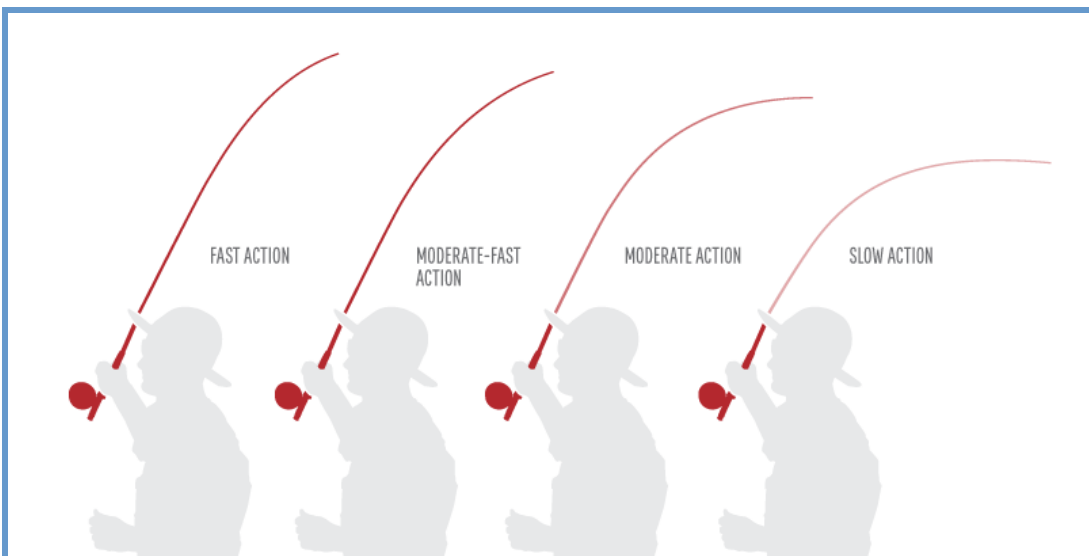
In determining what rod to acquire, the first step is to determine

what species you are primarily after. Answer this honestly because it affects everything else that follows. For example, a rod designed for small panfish would be a lousy rod for large brown trout or bass.

### Fly Rod Action

The action of a fly rod is determined by how flexible it is. Fly rod flexibility is measured during the backcast.

While there are hybrid types when it comes to action, we are only going to consider the main three types. The hybrid's are usually a combination of the three main types and are used for highly specialized situations or for highly tuning one's equipment for their specific casting technique.



Fast, or tip-flex, fly rods are stiffer resulting in a slightly bent tip with the rest of the rod being mostly straight. A fast action rod gives you more power for longer casts and the power allows for easier casting on windy days.

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## The Right Rod - Cont.

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Long casts and less problems in the wind sound good, right? Well, the power associated with a fast rod makes getting a feel for the fly and line more difficult, especially

for a beginner, making precise casts very hard. Also, a more flexible rod is necessary for shorter casts when a smoother touch and greater accuracy are needed. You don't want to slam your fly and line into the water and scare off the

fish you are stalking.

Medium, or Mid-Flex, rods are the most versatile rods available. They perform well in a variety of conditions and are easier to learn as the caster will begin to get the feel of the fly and line on the rod. On the backcast, a medium action rod will be bent down to about the halfway point of the rod.

Slow, or full-flex rods, are extremely flexible. On the backcast, a slow action rod will start bending about 3/4 of the way down the rod. It will be arched into a shallow, graceful 90° angle at full backcast.

Slow action rods are perfect for fishing small streams. The streams of the Kishatchie come to mind. The flexibility makes it easier to cast and make a great presentation of the water. Small fish like bream, brook trout and small rainbows are more fun to catch on a flexible rod.

### Recommended Fly Rod Features for Beginning Anglers

Hopefully, you've read the entire article "The Right Rod". If you haven't, please do so to understand my recommendations. While no one rod is right for every circumstance, I understand that most beginning anglers are on a budget and can't/won't spring for more than one rod to start. These are, in my opinion, the best all around features for a starter fly rod:

1. *8 to 8½ foot rod.* Beginners shouldn't go any longer and only shorter if the majority of their fishing will be smaller fish like panfish or brook trout.
2. *5 weight rod, reel and line.* Match the weight for all three to get a system that is designed to function well together. A 5 weight fly rod is extremely versatile.
3. *Medium-action rod.* A rod with medium action is pretty forgiving to learn on and, on a 5 weight rod, in my opinion, is the most versatile of fly rods.
4. *Price.* While not a feature recommendation, I would say buy the best quality rod your budget will allow. That being said, you don't need a \$500 rod or combo for that matter (see below). Cheap fly rods perform poorly and will lead to frustrations in the beginning angler. By purchasing a higher quality rod, you will not "outgrow" it and will get many years of use from it.
5. Use 1-4 to buy a "combo". That is a rod, reel, line and usually a case in one package. These are much cheaper than purchasing the equipment separately and you are assured of getting equipment that is "matched" for the best performance. This helps make the buying decision easier as you are buying one package instead of three or four separate pieces.

If you need more information on what to purchase, consult one of your fellow NLFFers or the expert at your local fly shop. I'm sure any of them would be more than happy to answer any questions that you may have.



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**Special Event - July 23, 2016**



**The North Louisiana Fly Fishers  
4<sup>th</sup> Annual Masters Series  
presents:**

# **A Day with Bob Clouser**



Saturday July 23, 2016  
Doors Open at 8:30am  
Program 9:00am - 4:00pm

Red River National Wildlife Refuge  
150 Eagle Bend Point  
Bossier City, LA 71112

Tickets are \$40.00 each  
Early Bird Special - \$35.00 if purchased before June 1st  
Seating is limited so get your tickets now!

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**The North Louisiana Fly Fishers  
would like to thank these supporters for sponsoring  
the NLFF's 4th Annual Masters Series.**



**CONTRABAND  
FLY CASTERS**



**GRAY WOLF FLY SHOP**





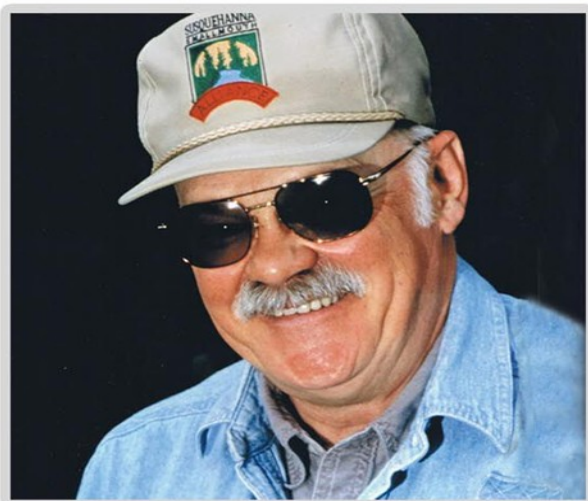
Special Event - July 23, 2016

# Bob Clouser presents

## “Bass Fishing, Top to Bottom”

- Casting with Bob at the boat dock on Lake Catherine by the Refuge
- Bass fishing presentation at the Red River National Wildlife Refuge
- Fly tying demonstration with Bob

Optional: At the conclusion of the presentation, those that are interested can meet at Ralph & Kacoo’s Cajun Restaurant for dinner with Bob Clouser. (Dinner is not part of the event and is not included in the ticket price.)



### **INDUCTED LEGENDARY ANGLER**

**BOB CLOUSER**

2000 - Pennsylvania

Bob specializes in fly fishing for smallmouth bass on the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. Bob’s guests are urged to conserve the species by practicing “catch and release.” This policy has earned him many conservation awards from fishing organizations such as, Trout Unlimited, the Susquehanna Smallmouth Alliance and the Dr. James Henshall Award from the Federation of Fly Fishers.

## The Right Rod - Cont.

(Continued from page 7)

### Fly Rod (and Line) Weight

Rods with a higher weight rating will weigh more because they tend to be longer, thicker and stronger. But don't confuse the rods weight designation with how much the rod weighs. The fly rod's weight rating

lead to problems with casting precision and line control. Using a small fly on a heavy line will cause the fly to be slammed into the water behind the weight of the line. Alternatively, attach a heavy fly to a light line and the fly will most likely choose a destination that is not the one intended! Again, control

6 weight - Not much fun for small fish but ideal for all trout. Good for bass, small salmon and similarly sized fish.

7 weight - Great line for all bass fishing, steelhead and small to medium sized salmon. Overkill on panfish and average trout meaning no fun.

8 weight and higher - used for larger and stronger fish like large salmon and saltwater species in particular.

Ideally, you want to match your line, rod and reel weight rating. While your equipment won't explode into a fireball if you don't match it up, your fishing experience for the



determines what weight of fly line that it was built to match.

Fly line is measured by how much the first 30 feet of line weighs in grains. Fly line manufacturers convert this to a number (example. 4 weight) that is matched against rods and reels making purchasing equipment designed to work efficiently together much easier.

Choosing the wrong weight of line for the fly you are using can

be lost. Here is a basic guide:

1-3 weight - use for very small fish like brook trout and most panfish.

4 weight - good all-around fly line for panfish and small to medium trout.

5 weight - Another good all-around fly line for average size bass and virtually all trout. Will work for small fish but lose some of the fun.

most part will be better, especially for beginners. There are exceptions for specific situations and niche-type rods, but these are best left to the experts.

### Fly Rod Length

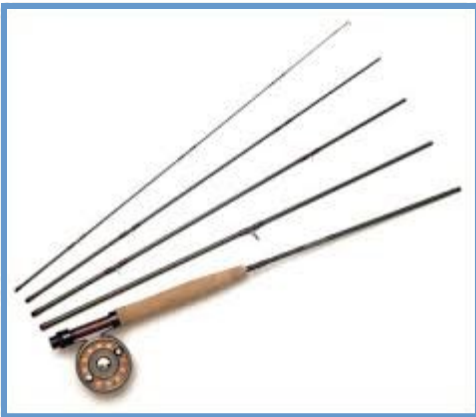
The length of the rod is just as important as its weight rating. A long rod will deliver more line farther than a short one, but don't as-

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## The Right Rod - Cont.

(Continued from page 10)

sume you need the longest rod available. Fly fishing, trout fishing in particular, is often a matter of finesse. Dropping a fly in a pocket of water the size of a tea cup can mean the difference between fish or no fish. In some situations, small mountain trout streams, for example, a typical cast might be 20 feet or even less. A long rod won't pro-



vide any major benefit in that situation and it may end up preventing you from making accurate casts. Overhead limbs have a way of reaching down and smacking long rod tips. A shorter rod will help prevent that. Fly rods designed for tight quarters come as short as six feet, but a 7-foot or even 7' 6" rod is a good all-purpose trout stick.

Big water like a western trout river, a bass lake or even the ocean demands a longer rod for

the mere fact that it can cast a fly farther than a shorter rod. You'll sacrifice a little accuracy with those longer casts, but distance often matters more than finesse on bigger water. A 9-foot rod is a good all-around length for big, open water, but some anglers favor a 10-footer.

### Other Considerations

How far do you travel to fish? Do you fly to fishing destinations? A rod that breaks down into four or more pieces can fit in carry-on luggage. A two piece rod is faster to assemble and will get you in the water quicker.

Pay close attention to fly rod construction when buying a rod especially from the internet. Cheap rods are available with dubious construction and I would recommend sticking with a rod made of graphite. While a great deal of satisfaction can be had by building and fishing your own bamboo rod, graphite is currently



the state-of-the-art material for rod construction. They are lighter and stronger. Although a 5-ounce rod may feel like a feather in your hands, it might feel like a sledgehammer after a long day on the water.

Of course, if you've chosen the right rod, you'll be too busy to notice!



### How Times Have Changed

Over the years, rod materials have changed. From bamboo to fiberglass to graphite, also known as carbon fiber.

The other day, I was watching a TV show from 1961 and this boy was excited about his "new" fishing rod. He was proudly showing it off to a very elderly man who was amazed at the sleekness of the rod. The boy exclaimed that it was made out of fiberglass to which the man replied, "Fiberglass, huh? Bamboo must be gettin' hard to find!"

My, how times have changed!





## Fly of the Month - "Cajun Tickler"



Cajun Tickler - Tied by Dick Burton and Photographed by Elmer G. Meiler

(This pattern will be tied by Scott Irwin at Bass Pro this month and the tyer, Dick Burton, will be at our April 12th meeting.)

### Materials:

Hook: Size 14 curved hook

Thread: 8/0 thread

Bead: 1/8 gold bead

Body: Rayon embroidery thread in two contrasting colors

Legs: Round rubber legs

Thorax: Peacock herl

Hackle: Grizzly hackle fibers

Begin by opening the gap of the hook a bit with pliers. Bend the hook shank down somewhat to make a more bug like body shape. Place the bead on the hook and

slide it up to the eye

Start the thread behind the bead and wrap back into the hook bend. Tie in four or five grizzly hackle fibers.

Tease out one or two strands of thread (there are six in each piece of rayon) from a six inch piece of the rayon weaving material. Tie in along the side of the hook shank from the back to just about the halfway point of the shank. Repeat with the other section of rayon on the other side of the hook. Tie in a half hitch and cut off so you can begin weaving.

Use the overhand knot weave to make an abdomen up to the half-

way point on the shank. Start your tying thread again and secure both pieces of weaving material. Trim the ends and put in another half hitch.

Wrap your thread forward 3 or four turns and tie in a strand of peacock herl. Allow it to lie out past the rear of the hook.

Cut the rubber legs into three one inch sections. Lay the first one across the top of the hook just forward of the woven section, and tie it in using light thread tension with a figure eight wrap. It should resemble a wing on an airplane. After it is secure, make a couple of

regular wraps around the shank and slip in another section of leg on the near side of shank and tie this in with medium pressure. Repeat on the far side with the last section of leg. From above, the legs should resemble an X with a cross bar bisecting them. Wrap forward making sure not to alter the pattern the legs are splayed in. Place a drop of head cement on top of the legs to secure them in this shape.

Palmer the peacock herl around, over and between the legs until it is behind the bead. Tie it in and trim the end off the herl. Whip finish, and apply head cement.

*~Dirk Burton*

## From Our Members

### Annual Trip South by Tom Bullock

The first week in March, 2016 a group of friends traveled to Lamar, TX to spend a week on a farm of a high school classmate observing the wintering whooping cranes. I took the kayak for fishing in St. Charles Bay which is adjacent to the property. After a week on the property three of us took our RVs to Huntsville State Park northwest of Houston for a long gathering of the three couples and six more girls to celebrate

the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of one of the girls. There were 5 kayaks used to paddle around the park lake. In the past I have kayaked the lake and seen an occasional alligator. However on this trip we saw several gators on each trip out. On one trip around the lake we saw fourteen gators; three rather large

in the 10 ft. range. The gator shown above was longer than my kayak which is 11.5 ft. As you can see this guy had no fear of me or the kayak, but was watching me as intently as I was watching him.

Many of the gators were lying in

large gator I fell behind the group. I noticed as I followed that as the group passed the gators they would submerge and come up behind the group watching them move away. I saw four gators do this that the group missed.



Gators Watching People!! People Watching Gators!!

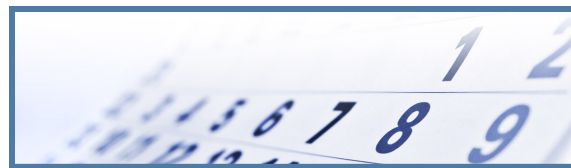
the grass in very shallow water. We saw one take a coot that got too close. A bass fisherman reported that a gator took his bass while he was working it out of the grass. It was reported that the gators are always hungry when they come out of hibernation. Due to a side trip to observe a particularly

bubbles on the water. It was shocking to see how powerful and fast these gators are in the water.

There were several photos of me and the gators, but I noticed the cameraman always kept me between the camera and the gators.

*~Tom Bullock*

On another occasion one of our group unknowingly got too close to a rather large gator which was sunning in the grass. She did not see the gator until it exploded toward deeper water leaving a mud trail and line of

**NLFF Calendar**

**Apr 8th - 9th: "7th Annual Caddo Conclave".** Hosted by the East Texas Fly Fishers and the North Louisiana Fly Fishers. Caddo Lake State Park, Karnack, TX. Friday potluck dinner 5:00pm. Saturday breakfast 8:00am. Speakers throughout the day. See advertisement on page 4 of this issue.

**Apr 12th: NLFF Monthly Meeting.** Red River Wildlife Refuge, 150 Eagle Bend Point, Bossier City, LA. Social hour at 6pm, meeting starts at 7pm. Dirk Burton will give a presentation on bass and bream fishing in the Atchafalaya Basin. He will also be tying some of his favorite flies during social hour.

**Apr 21st: Fly Tying Workshop.** White River Fly Shop in Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA., 6:00-7:30pm. Scott Irwin will be tying a woven fly called the "Cajun Tickler".

**Apr 26th: NLFF Executive Board meeting.** 6:00pm at Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA upstairs in the conference room directly across from the elevator.

**Apr 30th: "Spring Thaw 2016".** BBQ and Fly Fishing at Johnny and Judy Thomas' place. Bank fishing for bass, bream, crappie and catfish on a 3-acre pond. Club will provide drinks and cook BBQ. Please bring a side dish. Directions and times will be provided at the April club meeting.

**May 10th: NLFF Monthly Meeting.** Red River Wildlife Refuge, 150 Eagle Bend Point, Bossier City, LA. Social hour at 6pm, meeting starts at 7pm. John Williams from Pack & Paddle will present fishing the Louisiana marsh for Speckled Trout and Redfish.

**May 19th: Fly Tying Workshop.** White River Fly Shop in Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA., 6:00-7:30pm. Fly and tyer to be determined.

**May 21th: Kayaks on the Cross.** Fishing Cross Lake by kayak. Launch and fish the upper end of Cross Lake. Linda Bethea will be Dutch oven cooking and accepting donations for Heroes on the Water. Join us for Kayaking, fishing and sampling. Come help her raise money for a worthy cause. More details in next month's issue.

**May 24th: NLFF Executive Board meeting.** 6:00pm at Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA upstairs in the conference room directly across from the elevator.



**NEWSLETTER ITEMS DUE!**  
**SEND ITEMS TO EDITOR:**  
**STORIES, PHOTOS, ITEMS OF**  
**INTEREST ARE ALL**  
**WELCOME!**



## Upcoming Events

**Apr 8th - 9th: "7th Annual Caddo Conclave"** hosted by the East Texas Fly Fishers and the North Louisiana Fly Fishers. Caddo Lake State Park, Karnack, TX. Friday potluck dinner 5:00pm. Saturday breakfast 8:00am. Speakers throughout the day. See advertisement on page 3 of this issue.

**Apr 14th - 16th: "Sow Bug Roundup: A Celebration of Fly Fishing"** hosted by the North Arkansas Fly Fishers, Baxter County Fairgrounds, Mountain Home, AR. \$5 per person for all three days, kids under 12 get in free. Hours are 9 am to 4 pm.

**May 7th: "7th Annual Bass on the Fly Tournament"** A catch/photo/release (CPR) tournament exclusively for fly fishing. Proceeds support Reel Recovery and the Texas Council of the IFFF. Categories: Club, Boat, and Non-Boat (Kayak, Canoe, Bank, Float Tube, etc.). Lake Fork Marina, Lake Fork, Texas. 6am to 2pm. For more info, go to [www.bassonthefly.org](http://www.bassonthefly.org).

**May 13th - 14th: "15th Annual Smallmouth Rendezvous & Fly Tying Extravaganza"** hosted by the Northeastern Oklahoma Fly Fishing Club and Native Women Fly Fishers. First Baptist Church, 201 Commercial Rd, Tahlequah, OK. 9am - 4pm daily. Free admission. For more info, go to [www.neokflyfishers.org](http://www.neokflyfishers.org) or call Walter Davis 918-360-2085 or Larry Stinnett 918-931-0940.

**Jun 24th - 26th: "Grand Isle Weekend"** hosted by the Red Stick Fly Fishers. Blue Dolphin Inn, Grand Isle, LA. A weekend of surf, marsh, and inshore fishing the 'Cajun Bahamas' with fly fishers from all over Louisiana and Mississippi. For more info, go to [www.rsff.org](http://www.rsff.org).

**Jul 23rd: "NLFF Masters Series Presents A Day with Bob Clouser"**. Come spend a day with the legendary fly tyer. See advertisement on pages 8 and 9 of this issue.



### North Louisiana Fly Fishers

First IFFF Affiliated Club in Louisiana

P.O. Box 29531

Shreveport, LA 71149

email: [nlffclub@gmail.com](mailto:nlffclub@gmail.com)

We're on the Web!

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

**Founded in 1984**

**Serving the Ark-La-Tex for over 30 years**

It is the charge of the North Louisiana Fly Fishers to afford the general public and our members in particular, a better understanding of Fly Fishing, Fly Tying, and Rod Building. We wish to perpetuate the sport as a most pleasurable and exciting fishing method and provide education, instruction and the opportunities for relaxation to the membership.

The North Louisiana Fly Fishers (NLFF) Club serves the Ark-La-Tex area surrounding Shreveport. As the closest cold water fishery, we consider the Little Missouri (Little' Mo) River near Murfreesboro, AR our home waters. We also fish the local rivers and lakes. We even have a growing group of kayak fishermen that, as well as the local rivers and lakes, will fish the gulf coast marshes for some saltwater action!

We meet the second Tuesday of every month at the Red River Wildlife Refuge (150 Eagle Bend Point, Bossier City, LA). Meeting starts at 7pm but come about 6pm to visit, tie flies and practice casting when the weather permits. See you there!