

The Fly Line

Monthly Newsletter of the North Louisiana Fly Fishers

Sept 2018

Volume 4, Issue 9



North Louisiana Fly Fishers
Established in 1984

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It's Hot !!

(From the Editor)

No, I'm not talking about the weather. But I wouldn't argue that point either. I'm taking about fishing! Don't let the Dog Days of Summer get you down. Go fishing!! I know the weather is hot and humid, but that's no excuse to not get in some tug time. That's exactly what I did today (Labor Day).



I hear they are tearing up the specs and reds down south and I haven't done too bad around here either. Big Cypress Bayou in Jefferson, TX is my go to when I just want to wear my arm out.

I planned on going early, around sun up, and fish until it got too hot for me. But if the fish are biting, heat be damned! Just make sure to stay hydrated. Just so happened that it was overcast and the forecast called for scattered showers. Knowing that the sun behind the clouds would keep the air temps down some, I decided to go regardless of the rain threat.

I put in just after 7 am and started paddling upstream while fishing. That way, when it gets hot, I'm not fighting the current on the way back. While I was prepared for the heat, the scattered showers around the area (a few over me) kept the temps down. By 1pm when I headed to the boat ramp, I had landed 39 various sunfish and one 13" bass. (No pic of the bass - the phone was in the waterproof box at that time.)

So get out and go fishing! You never know around here what the fishing or the weather may bring.



2018 NLFF Banquet

Date: September 11th

Location: Shane's Seafood & BBQ on Mansfield Rd in south Shreveport

Time: Banquet starts at 6 pm and we recommend coming early to get dinner out of the way.

Please plan on supporting our club by attending and inviting as many guests as you can to our annual banquet. Every member's help is needed in contributing new or slightly used items for raffle prizes as well as collecting donations from businesses (who will be acknowledged at the banquet).

Bring your raffle items early so we can we them setup on the tables. The banquet committee has some fun interactive activities and other surprises planned with opportunities to win special prizes but . . . **you have to be there!** Additionally, this year's silent auction items will be available for everyone to have fun bidding against each other. There will also be a few new twists on some of the raffles and a new raffle game or two. This is shaping up to be a banquet like no other! We also want you to attend to recognize and thank our leaders for their service. We can make this a great event - TOGETHER!



2018 NLFF Executive Board

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| President | Chris Pierce | 318-347-0494 | cpierce213@hotmail.com |
| Treasurer | Tom Bullock | 318-393-7729 | twbullock@aol.com |
| Secretary | TBD | | |
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| Member at Large | Joe Linder | 318-245-9385 | toothpick1936@gmail.com |
| Member at Large | David Gilbert | 318-458-9450 | hdgilbert850@gmail.com |

2018 NLFF Banquet

SAVE THE DATE!

NLFF ANNUAL BANQUET

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2018

6:00 PM

SHANE'S SEAFOOD & BARBECUE

9176 MANSFIELD ROAD

SHREVEPORT, LA

INVITE FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOR A FUN-FILLED EVENING!

ENJOY A DELICIOUS MEAL!



GET LUCKY WITH RAFFLE PRIZES!



AND TAKE HOME SOME REALLY COOL STUFF!



**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE, CONTACT
GENE THIBODEAUX, BANQUET CHAIR
337-254-8195**

Fly Fishing for Smallmouth - 5 Common Mistakes

by Mike Smith

Are you guilty of the 5 most common smallmouth fly fishing mistakes? Here are quick fixes for better float fishing. Fishing from rafts, drift boats, and skiffs has unique challenges. I know – I've been guiding from a raft for nearly two decades. During this time, I've found there are five common things that anglers floating for smallmouth consistently struggle with.

1. Too much false casting, not enough time with your fly in the water.

It seems obvious if your fly isn't in the water you won't catch fish, but newbies to smallmouth float fishing will sometimes make five, six, even ten false casts to present the fly, all the time passing up precious smallmouth territory as they drift by.

The easy fix: Cast with a single haul.



Mike Smith on the New River in Virginia.

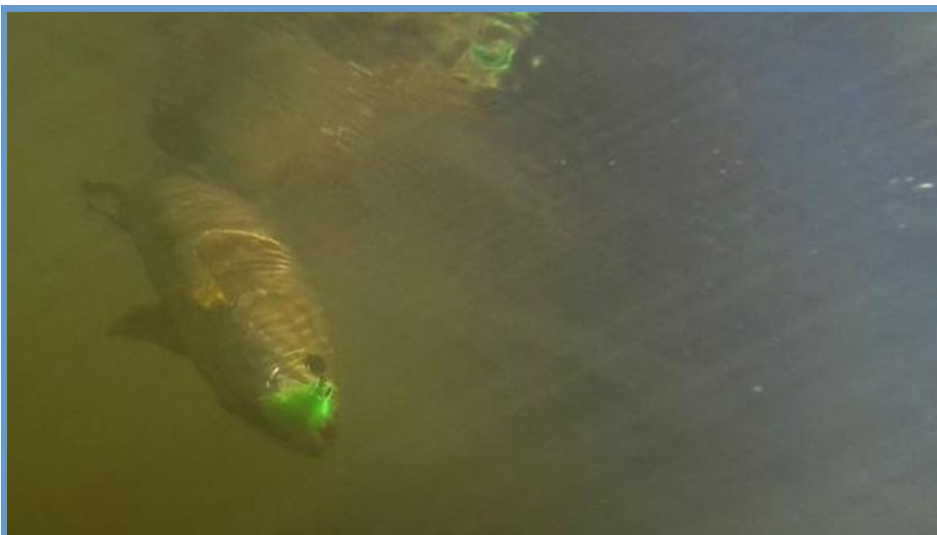
When casting, don't retrieve the fly all the way to the boat – this necessitates excessive false casting – and, instead, work the area at a distance by picking up enough line to load the rod and return it downstream on one cast. Your goal should be to cover as much water as possible – often tar-

geting ledges, shorelines, grass beds, riffles, and so on – and the best way to do that is to cast with a single haul (or double haul depending on the conditions) and return the fly to the water ASAP.

For example, if we are drifting along a productive length of shoreline fishing a popper, I have my clients "splat" the bug down, drift it ten feet or so, pop it once, then pick it up and present the fly again. We might do this 5 or 6 times along a 100 foot stretch from 40 to 50 feet away, each time repeated with a single haul and ending in another "splat" – the dinner bell that triggers a bite.

If you bring the fly all the way back to the boat and begin casting

(Continued on page 5)



Fly Fishing for Smallmouth - 5 Common Mistakes, Cont.

(Continued from page 4)

all over again, you may get only two casts and “splats” on the entire stretch of fishy water, which in the course of a day is a lot of missed opportunities!

2. Not considering the smallie “strike zone.”

The biggest problem anglers have drift fishing relates simply to accurate casting and effective presentation, which involves much more than stripping and mending techniques that can vary under different situations and for different flies. Both casting and presentation entail learning to read water, recognizing where fish hold, and adopting the ability to see underwater struc-

ture so that the water is fished properly. Lucky for you, there is one basic casting and presentation principle that will instantly give your smallie fishing both a boost

and a starting point for future improvement.

The easy fix: Cast to the far side of their strike zone and retrieve your fly through it.

Smallmouth are ambush feeders, so the fly needs to be retrieved

five feet off the bank literally hits the fish in the tail, most likely only spooking it.

Or consider working an eddy or “inverted V” behind a boulder; here it’s important to cast to the other side and come through the V instead of landing on the side clos-



Flymen head honcho Martin Bawden caught this smallie with a Fish-Skull Crafty Deceiver on a recent trip.

through their strike zone, not start at the edge and exit it. For example, when casting to a bank where fish are holding tight, it's best to work the fly directly off the shore. Missing the mark by casting

est to you. If you don't, eager fish may still chase down your fly, but they are much more likely to turn off at the last minute or simply miss the fly on the take because the

(Continued on page 6)

Fly Fishing for Smallmouth - 5 Common Mistakes, Cont.



poor cast and/or presentation caused unnecessary difficulty. Proper execution can actually make the difference in a 30 fish day and 10 fish day!

3. Sloppy line control.

Since a stripping basket can be cumbersome to wear on a raft most clients prefer to strip into the floor or their seat if standing. If not careful, it's easy to mishandle the line and get it wrapped around other rods, net handles, or back into the water where it can be pulled under the boat.

A consistent mistake I see anglers make when casting (assuming they

have cleared everything in the raft for starters) is indiscriminately letting go of the line and having it wrap around their reel. Once they recover the line, they have usually missed their opportunity at making a clean presentation (possibly missing an instant strike too) and have to begin again.

The easy fix: Guide the line with your thumb and pointer finger.

This entire issue can be easily avoided by simply creating a ring with the thumb and pointer finger and guiding the line through that to the rod hand to begin the stripping, mending, or whatever the circum-

stances dictate. Once stripping, be careful to keep the line neat at your feet instead of throwing it in other areas of the boat where it can get tangled.

4. Too much slack in your line.

It's absolutely vital to eliminate slack in your line. Why? Because you must keep contact with the fly to feel the strike. Poor mending technique, not keeping the rod tip down when stripping, and sloppy casts that pile lots of line on the water are the primary culprits for slack.

Over and over again, I see an-

(Continued on page 7)

Fly Fishing for Smallmouth - 5 Common Mistakes, Cont.

(Continued from page 6)

glers attempt to start their cast with a sag in their line and the rod tip at eye level, which makes it tough to load the rod.

The easy fix: Keep your rod tip pointed down.

The main thing for you to focus on is keeping your rod tip down near the surface of the water. This helps you to get the most leverage possible in your hook set, which you'll need because smallmouth have extremely hard mouths lined with thick cartilage.

If using a popper, popping should be done by stripping the line rather than thrusting the rod tip into the air, which introduces large amounts of slack and prevents a solid hook set. The other value this provides is at the begin-

ning of your cast. Keeping the rod tip low alleviates slack and gets the end of the line moving, which is essential to start the cast.

5. Only fishing half the water.

The backcast is a huge asset to fishing from a boat that not nearly enough otherwise competent anglers have mastered. Your backcast allows you to fish both sides of the boat without having to cast over the guide and the vessel. This is especially important when sharing the raft with another angler or dealing with wind. Most saltwater anglers are proficient at this, but not so many trout anglers are used to it.

The easy fix: Use your backcast.

N o t e
that this is not the same as

an over the shoulder cast. To do this with proper presentation, make a standard overhand cast in one direction but present the fly in the other by delivering and/or shooting the line on the backcast.

Take it to the water!

If you work on these five key areas – covering water efficiently with the single haul, effective casting and presentation through the "strike zone," line control, eliminating slack with your rod tip down, and using your backcast – you will be much more successful at float fishing for smallmouth bass.



About Mike Smith:

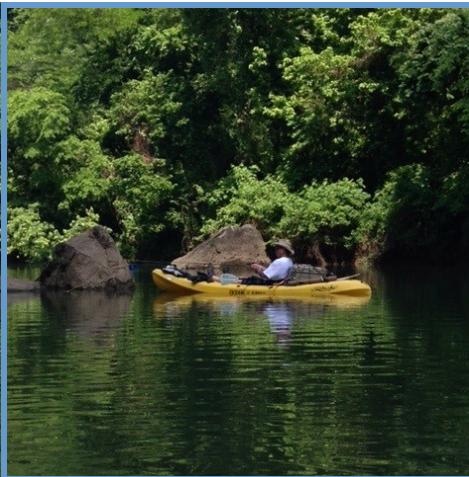
Mike is a fly designer, product development specialist, and lead smallmouth guru at Flymen Fishing Co., as well as the owner and operator of New River Fly Fishing. He's written five fly fishing books, known as the Angler's Guide Series. His signature flies include the Skull Daddy Crayfish, Foxy Shrimp, Forage Fly, Saltwater Forage Fly, River Creature, Salt Creature, and Egg Sucking Flash Minnow.



Labor Day on the White River and the Little Red River

By Vicki Thibodeaux

Labor Day weekend proved to be a fun-filled adventure of kayaking and fishing on the White River and the middle fork of the Little Red River.



Gene and I, along with a couple of friends, put kayaks in at the Ozark National Forest White River Optimus boat launch and traveled eight miles to the Sylamore Creek/White River boat launch in Allison, Arkansas. It was a great day with only one generator running at the



Bull Shoals Dam and no generation on the Norfork River. The current was perfect for being able to fish without paddling too much or having a really swift current. A few rainbow trout were caught with a nice one every once in a while. The trip took a little over four hours which included several stops to swim. It was a warm and breezy day but the water was cool and refreshing.

Our next adventure, a couple of days later, was on the middle fork of the Little Red River. Little Red River Outfitters dropped us off five miles north of Shirley, Arkansas. The fishing was a little slow but produced a few good small mouths and some very small bream. The water was not as refreshing as the White River. At six-foot four-inches, the level was low but the current was still strong with white-water rapids rolling over treacherous boulders that resulted in a lost rod, sinking a kayak, and a leg injury. The snakes were hanging from trees that you couldn't avoid running under as well as perched on rocks in the middle of the water. However, we still managed to take a few swimming breaks and finished the trip in about four hours.

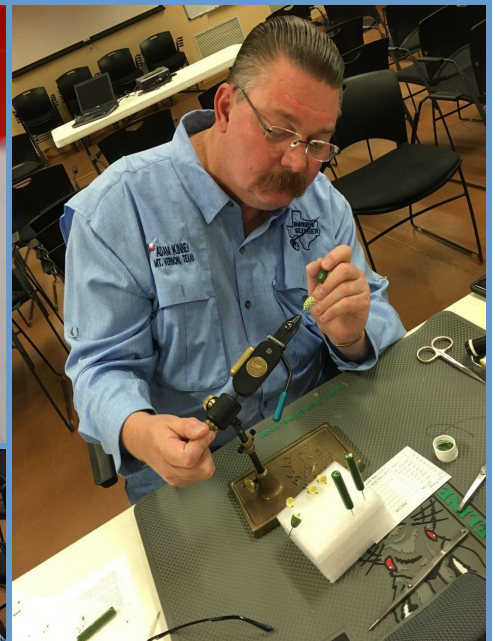
Although we had a fun time on both rivers, I think we'll stick to

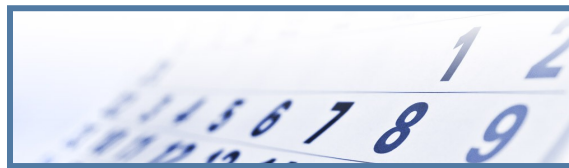


calmer water in the future. I believe another eight-mile White River trip from Calico Rock to Optimus next time would be a great choice. Especially in the fall when the leaves are colorful, the air is cooler, and the fish are more active. Hope to see YOU on the river!



NLFF Popper Class with Ron Braud (in Pictures)



NLFF Calendar

Sep 11th: NLFF 2018 Banquet. Shane's Seafood and BBQ on Mansfield Rd in Shreveport. Dinner at 6:00pm, fundraising raffles to start at 6:45pm. Bring the family and friends.

Sep 20th: Fly Tying Workshop. White River Fly Shop in Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA., 6:00-7:30pm.

Sep 25th: NLFF Executive Board meeting. 6:00pm at Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA upstairs in the conference room directly across from the elevator.

Oct 9th: NLFF Monthly Meeting. Red River Wildlife Refuge, 150 Eagle Bend Point, Bossier City, LA. Rush Clay will conduct a presentation on Lake Tenkiller in Oklahoma. Casting lessons during our social gathering at 6:00pm, meeting starts at 6:45pm and presentation will begin at 7:00pm.

Oct 18th: Fly Tying Workshop. White River Fly Shop in Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA., 6:00-7:30pm.

Oct 23rd: NLFF Executive Board meeting. 6:00pm at Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA upstairs in the conference room directly across from the elevator.

Nov 13th: NLFF Monthly Meeting. Red River Wildlife Refuge, 150 Eagle Bend Point, Bossier City, LA. Rush Clay will conduct a presentation on Lake Tenkiller in Oklahoma. Casting lessons during our social gathering at 6:00pm, meeting starts at 6:45pm and presentation will begin at 7:00pm.

Nov 15th: Fly Tying Workshop. White River Fly Shop in Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA., 6:00-7:30pm.

Nov 27th: NLFF Executive Board meeting. 6:00pm at Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA upstairs in the conference room directly across from the elevator.

Dec 11th: NLFF Monthly Meeting. Red River Wildlife Refuge, 150 Eagle Bend Point, Bossier City, LA. Casting lessons during our social gathering at 6:00pm, meeting starts at 6:45pm and presentation will begin at 7:00pm.

Dec 20th: Fly Tying Workshop. White River Fly Shop in Bass Pro Shop in Bossier City, LA., 6:00-7:30pm.

Dec 25th: NLFF Executive Board meeting. C A N C E L L E D ! Christmas Day!



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

Upcoming Events

Sep 22nd: 10th annual Rio Grande Fly Fishing Rodeo sponsored by the New Orleans Fly Fishers Club. Saturday, September 22, 2018. New Orleans City Park 7:30am - 12:00 noon. \$10 entry fee, proceeds go to a local charity. For any questions or to register please call or e-mail A.J. Rosenbohm, NOFF Events Coordinator, 504-952-1340 or nola-flyguy@att.net

Oct 5th - 6th: 2018 FFI Southern Fly Fishing Fair. Sponsored by the Southern Council, Fly Fishers International (FFI) Friday-Saturday, October 5-6, 2018, Vada Sheid Convention Center, Arkansas State University campus, Mountain Home, AR. Registration available online or by mail. For details, go to www.ifffsoc.org.

Nov 2nd - 4th: North Toledo Bend Rendezvous. North Toledo Bend State Park, Zwolle, LA. Friday - Sunday, November 2-4, 2018. Sponsored by the Gulf Coast and Texas Councils of Fly Fishers International (FFI). An annual gathering of members of fly fishing clubs from Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi and beyond. No planned activities but plenty of fly tying, food, fly casting, fishing. Fee includes lodging and meals. Check out the Rendezvous webpage for more details: <http://pages.suddenlink.net/w/Rendez/indexR.html>

Nov 9th - 11th: Red Stick Fall Catch-n-Eat. Red Stick Fly Fishers annual Fall marsh fishing trip Friday-Saturday, November 9-11, 2018. Friday evening gathering at local restaurant (optional). Saturday evening gathering and fish/shrimp/veggie fry in Golden Meadow, LA. Must be member of RSFF or other fly fishing club to participate. For details, go to www.rsff.org

Jan 26th - 27th: NLFF Frozen Chozen. Little Missouri River, AR. Fishing all weekend and a hamburger and hot-dog cookout provided by the NLFF on Saturday. Bring a side and/or dessert. Plan to eat around 12:30pm. Camping and lodging near the dam or in Murfreesboro, AR are available.



North Louisiana Fly Fishers

First FFI (formerly IFFF) Affiliated Club in Louisiana

P.O. Box 29531

Shreveport, LA 71149

email: nlffclub@gmail.com

We're on the Web!

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!