



South Coast Fly Anglers



NEWSLETTER July 2026

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Preparing to cast.

A short Events Calendar, (which will be topped up at the coming Committee meeting) and two good articles on recent outings, plus some info on the minnows that we found in the shallows of Wattled Crane lake, on our recent outing, make for a very readable newsletter this month. Thank you to Dave and Steve for the articles and to the members who contributed at the very informative monthly meeting on the 25th.

Coming Events.

Events calendar

Date	Event	Venue	Time
July 1st	Committee meeting	Pieter's home	18h00
July 8th	Fly-tying workshop	Neil's home	18h15
July 8th	Travel and grub meeting	Neil's home	After fly-tying
July 12th	Salt water outing	Ramsgate Granny's Pool	07h00 or before
July 24th to 26th	Trout outing	Mountain Lake	TBA

The **Committee meeting is at Piet's home, on Wednesday, 1st July, at 18h00**. Bring and braai, as Piet is a total bachelor at present. Because the current Events Calendar has been depleted, a comprehensive list for the next couple of months will be drawn up. Watch this space.

The **fly-tying workshop is at Neil's home on Wednesday 8th July at 18h15**. We will tie the freshwater Timberline Emerger and the Saltwater Maxi's Dogs Breakfast. No exotic materials required, even for the Timberline Emerger, which I cannot recall having been a Fly of the Month in the past. Recipes for both flies have been distributed to club members. The travel and Grub meeting for the Mountain Lake trip will be held after the workshop.

We have a salt-water outing to Ramsgate Granny's Pool on Sunday 12th July. Be there any time before or after 07h00. No braai facilities I'm afraid, so it will be BYO sarmies and refreshments for after the fishing.

Neil, John and Arthur are off to Matatiele on Friday 24th July to get the big ones that Mountain Lake has to offer. The cottage was graded at minus 5 stars last year and has deteriorated even more since then, so we will stay in a B&B in town and travel up to the lake every day.

Past Events.

Trout outing to Wattled Crane, Friday 19th June to Monday 22nd June. By Dave Muldenhauer.

The excitement had been building for weeks. Flies were tied, kick boats loaded and by 06:00 on Thursday morning Steve and I were on the road. Neil and Sakkie, Arthur and John made up the balance of the convoy and we stopped on the dirt road after the Pink Church, to greet each other and sample the crisp mountain air. The dirt road triggered our excitement, so we pushed on and arrived at the cottage at 09:30.

It didn't take long for everyone to settle into familiar roles of setting up and settling in. Despite the cold Arthur was walking around barefoot!



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John set up the can-crusher, and before long everyone was unpacked and eager to get onto the water. The first afternoon began with overcast skies and a breeze from the wall end of the dam, but it soon transformed into a picture-perfect winter's day with blue skies and barely a breath of wind. Arthur and I stayed out until after 16h30, determined to make every minute count, each landing a solid 35 cm trout while John also caught his first fish of the trip.

The evenings quickly settled into snacks, drinks and stories in front of the fire. We had an excellent meal, plenty of laughter and just enough banter to make bedtime much later than planned.

Saturday brought colder, windier conditions. Arthur, leading by example, was first on the water and unfortunately lost a very good fish. Neil, Sakkie and Steve each caught feisty stockies. Sakkie somehow managed to lose his hearing aid, after removing it to escape the noise of the wind. Back at the cottage, Arthur and Neil produced a hearty brunch, before we all regrouped for the afternoon session.

Persistence paid off, when I landed two beautiful fish of 61 cm and 59 cm, on an olive, then black Matuka respectively. Neil also got into the action and caught a fish at the top end of the dam. Arthur, unsurprisingly, was the last angler off the water. We repeated another night of good food and loads of fun in the lounge, while the fire kept us toasty.

Sunday dawned calm and slightly warmer. Determined to emulate Arthur's work ethic, I launched early and was rewarded with a beautiful 50 cm trout on a black Woolly Bugger. Arthur added another quality fish of around 45 cm. Sakkie had the biggest luck of all, by finding his lost hearing aid on his battery box! Brunch hit the spot perfectly and it was tempting to catch a snooze rather than head out again. As usual, Arthur led by example and headed out for the reason he was there, to spend time fishing!

The afternoon session proved technically challenging, with trout rising freely during a hatch of some sort, but refusing almost everything we offered them. John managed two fish, while Arthur added another stockie, proving once again that persistence usually pays off. By now the evening routine that followed was familiar and as good as each of the other night's festivities.

Our final morning offered mirror-like conditions and crystal-clear water. Trout cruised tantalisingly close to our kick boats, but despite frantic efforts, none of us could convince them to eat before it was time to head home.

The final tally for the trip was 15 Rainbows: Sakkie x1, Steve x1, Neil x2, Arthur x3, John x4, Dave x4. As always, the numbers tell only part of the story. What makes these trips so special is the group itself. Everyone contributes, whether it's cooking, cleaning, sharing a laugh or helping each other out. We fished many hours, ate exceptionally well, enjoyed cold beers and appreciated the privilege of being able to go on a trip like this together.

Monthly meeting. Umtentweni Tennis Club. Thursday 25th June.

Present: 12 members. **Apologies:** Dave M, Dick, Neil, Toi, Mike S, Reagan, Sakkie,

Visitors: Robyn Adriaanzen, who arrived as a visitor, but immediately paid her subs, so becomes our newest member. Welcome Robyn. As we always say, "May your association with SCFA be a long and mutually beneficial one."

Fly of the Month. Judged by Frank.

Freshwater: Royal Wulff: Pieter C. Pieter C, Sean, Pieter C, Sean, John, Arthur.

Saltwater: Steve Austin Crazy Charlie: Pieter C, Pieter C, Arthur, Sean, Sean, John.

Freestyle: Pieter C.

General:

John welcomed new-member, Robyn and said that he was sure that she would enjoy her association with the club for a long time.

Arthur gave a report on the trout trip to Wattled Crane. (See Dave's report above.) A discussion took place, with Sean and Mitch throwing knowledgeable light on the 4-inch minnows that were found in the dam.

These are not trout, as was initially thought, but Chubby Head Barb. (*Barbus anoplus*) This species has been renamed (*Enteromius anoplus*.) Good news, as they are indigenous, non-invasive, rapid breeders and good fodder fish for the trout, with which the dam is stocked.



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For those who are interested, a number of references are given in the “Fry, Fingerling and Stocky Stories” section on page 3 of this newsletter.

Frank showed us a tackle bag that he got from the Chinese shop in Sheppie. Paid R230.00 for it and it looks pretty good quality. It can be worn as a back pack or as a chest pack, when slung around the neck. Certainly, a better deal than a R2,000.00 job from an up-market tackle shop.

Sean said that the fish at Valley Lake are in much better condition this year, than they were last year, even though fishing is very slow at present.

Sean also suggested that a fly-casting clinic should be organised in the near future. This could be held at some open field or beach and he and other experienced club members could give a demo and tips on improving our casting technique.

Conner reported that he had recently fished Crystal Springs, where the fish also had a serious case of lock-jaw, which resulted in him only landing a couple of small fish, over the time that he was there.

New member, Robyn, who hails from Uvongo, said that she has caught a few bass and tilapia on conventional tackle, but has no experience of fly fishing and has no tackle. (*A good starting point, Robyn, as you have none of the bad habits that we have picked up over the years. Ed.*)

Mitch offered to bring a selection of rods and reels to Shelly Beach on Sunday, for Robyn to try out, as she has no kit of her own at present.

Steve also welcomed Robyn and said that club members would help out with any tackle that she needed, until she had found her feet and had decided what gear to purchase.

He reported that club funds are slightly above what they were last year, so things are looking good. He tabled a Financial Report, which Arthur will pass on to Dick.

Saltwater outing to Shelly Beach. Sunday 28th June. By Stephen Brand.

Steve arrived at 06h30, followed by Rob, Neil, John, Sakkie, Sean and Stacy, Marion, Dave S. and Elisa, with Mitch arriving just after 07h00.

We all fished to our hearts content and had good casting practise. The breeze was from the west and the water was nippy but clean. Waves were generally gentle.

No fish caught.

Fry, Fingerling and Stockie Stories.

A number of references to the Chubby Head Barb are given below, supplied by Professor Google.

Dr. James Cambray is a prominent South African ichthyologist and freshwater ecologist. Based primarily at the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, he is renowned for his extensive research on the reproduction, early life history, and conservation of indigenous southern African fishes.



Cambray. JA. 1983b. The feeding habits of the minnows of the genus *Barbus* (Pisces: Cyprinidae) in Africa, with special reference to *Barbus anoplus* Weber. Journal of the Limnological Society of Southern Africa. 9: 12-22.

Cambray J.A. 1984. The success of small cyprinid fishes of the genus *Barbus* in southern Africa, with special reference to *Barbus anoplus*. The Naturalist 28(2): 10-13.

Cambray J.A and Bruton M.N. 1984 The reproductive strategy of a colonising minnow, *Barbus anoplus* in a man-made lake in South Africa. Journal of Zoology. London. 204: 143-168.

Cambray J.A. and Bruton M.N. 1985. Age and growth of a colonising minnow, *Barbus anoplus* in a man-made lake in South Africa. Environmental Biology of Fishes 12(2): 131-141.

Last Cast.

Nothing for me to add, except to wish members and readers “Tight Lines.” With the sardine run threatening to take off at any stage, now is the time to get that line into the water as often as possible. One never knows when the fish will come on the bite.

Cheers Arthur.

