



South Coast Fly Anglers



NEWSLETTER December 2025

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Preparing to cast.

As this is the last newsletter for 2025, it is again appropriate to say a hearty thank you to all those who have contributed articles during the year. Your contributions are a two-fold blessing. No 1. They transform the newsletter into a club effort, rather than it simply being the thoughts of the scribe. No 2. It makes my task, as scribe, so much easier, knowing that an article will arrive more or less in time for the next edition. Thanks guys. Keep it up in 2026 and beyond. Arthur

Coming Events

Date	Event	Venue	Time
January 11th	Saltwater outing	Umzimkulu River or Voigt's	06h00
January 14th	Fly-tying workshop	Neil's home	18h15
January 21st	Committee meeting	Steve's home	18h00
January 25th	Saltwater outing	Impenjati	Early
January 29th	Monthly meeting	Umtentweni Tennis Club	18h00 for 18h30
February 8th	Saltwater outing	Rocky Bay	Early

Coming Events:

We have long said that we should fish the Umzimkulu river from kick-boats. Well, we finally have a date and trust that the river will co-operate and not be in full spate on **Sunday 11th January. We will probably launch from Brian Langer's Umzimkulu Marina**, which is about 500 metres upstream of Fish on the River. Be there at 06h00 and bring your pattie, wors or steak, as we will braai afterwards. Also bring some cash, as we may be charged an entrance fee, which will be less than R50.00. If the river is not dirty, Steve will send out an SMS notice and we will then probably fish Voigt's dam in Paddock. Braai afterwards, as usual.

The **first fly-tying workshop of 2026 will be at Neil's home at 18h15, on 14th January.** The FotM for January are the freshwater Black Muishond and the saltwater Gully Bugger. Recipes will be sent out at the end of December, to give you sufficient time to get the materials together. Remember, if you do not have any of the required stuff, someone at the workshop will have spares, so come along anyway.

There is a **Committee meeting at Steve's home on the 21st January**, at which we will select the flies that we will tie for next year's FotM. If you have a fly in mind that you would like to submit, drop me a line and we will consider it. I will need a suitable photograph and recipe, so kindly oblige.

We have a **salt water outing to Impenjati on Sunday 25th January. Be there at 06h00**, when the gates open. Not sure how safe the estuary will be, but the surf should be ok. Braai afterwards, so bring the necessary.

The **monthly meeting is at the Umtentweni Tennis Club on Thursday 29th January, at 18h00 for 18h30.** FotM that will be judged are the Black Muishond and the Gully Bugger. As usual, Steve will have the braai fire going, so bring what you can afford after the Christmas spend.

There will hopefully be a better turnout and better results than we had on our last outing to **Rocky Bay, when we again visit there on Sunday February 8th.** No braai facilities, so, after fishing, we will pop in to the restaurant, where a really good breakfast is served, at a reasonable rate.

Past Events.

Bass outing to Voigt's Dam. Sunday 16th November. By Stephen Brand.

Arthur, John, Steve, Pieter C., Reagan and visitors Dave Lambley and Danelle, (Pieter C's daughter) arrived around 7am to a 15 degree, wet south wester blowing.



Cont'd on Page 2.

The road from Sheppie was closed, due to protest action, so we used the Izotsha – Paddock route.

John was the only angler brave enough to go out on a kick-boat, the rest of the anglers fished the northern bank. The water was thrashed by us bank anglers, to little avail. Reagan got one small bass and John got a nice size bass of about 2 kg, one other of about 500 g and 20 small ones.

We all settled for a chin wag under the lapa. Reagan will be getting a fine for dropping his wors in the sand, before we packed up at about 10h30 am.

Rhodes flyfishing trip. 16-21st November 2025.by Dick Plaistowe.

Neil Scott, Mark Rose and Dick Plaistowe departed for Rhodes in the Eastern Cape Highlands, otherwise known by the locals as the “Centre of the Universe,” early on Sunday 16th November. The Google Maps route directs one through Kokstad, Matatiele, Mount Fletcher, with a signpost to Rhodes, about 10 kms past Mount Fletcher, on the road to Maclear, which then takes one on a dirt road through tribal lands over the Pitseng, past the well-known trout destination of Vrederus, owned by the Naude family and up the tortuous road to Naude’s Nek, at an altitude of slightly over 8000 feet a.m.s.l. The road from Naude’s Nek to Rhodes, is about 40 kms taking around one hour on a rocky, bumpy and sometimes slippery road to Rhodes. The Google maps show this total distance from the coast to be 387 kms, taking a bit over 7 hours.

After travelling this route many times, Neil and I decided some time ago to travel the longer route on tar, via Maclear, Ugie, Elliott, up the beautiful Barclay Pass to Barclay East and the last 65 kms on dirt to Rhodes, some 150 kms longer. but taking the same driving time, whilst being more comfortable, safer and less likely to have a tyre problem. Having said that I would encourage anyone that has not done the route via Naude’s Nek, to do so, as it is spectacular. Allow 8 hours in total to include fuel, coffee, leg stretch and nature breaks.

The long-range weather forecast turned out to be completely wrong and we drove through the windy and rainy weather that was affecting the whole of the Eastern Cape, Free State and KZN. The Rhodes streams that we were told had been crystal clear and fishing well, were found to be chocolate brown torrents, completely unfishable, as we drove into Rhodes. Sods Law I’m afraid. As it turned out, it had rained heavily from Thursday to Saturday, prior to our Sunday departure.

To keep it short, one of the advantages of Rhodes, with the number of fishable streams available, is that the conditions in at least one stream can improve within a couple of days, starting in the upper reaches and improving daily, provided that the rain has stopped.

We started fishing on Monday at a high-altitude Stillwater, called Loch Ness, just below the Tiffendell ski resort above 8000 feet a.m.s.l. The dirt road had deteriorated badly following the closure of Tiffendell, because of the Covid epidemic, definitely not for the faint of heart and took around an hour and a half to cover 20 kms. A very cold wind was blowing making casting a nightmare. Ever tenacious Neil, caught 1 fish, Mark and Dick zero.

Tuesday saw us on one of the uppermost beats on the Bokspruit, called Bothwell, where the water was still fast flowing and turbid, way too fast for dry fly and too dirty to fish, although we tried hard - Neil 1 , Dick 1, Mark still waiting. The water did improve as the day went on, with reducing water levels and improving water clarity.

Wednesday saw us on the same beat, as it was the only option, the water was at last “fishable,” if not great, but we persevered and started to catch on nymphs, having fished dry dropper and a nymph with a strike indicator. Neil 3, Dick 4, Mark still learning the ropes, but getting there, if not despondent. This style of stream fishing is often difficult, with treacherous underfoot conditions, particularly when the water is high and fast, often plenty of undergrowth and overgrowth, ready to claim one’s fly and spooky fish.

Thursday saw us on the Knockwarren beat, lower down on the Bokspruit, one of our favorite beats, with vastly better water, still a little on the fast side, but clean. Dry fly was now working at last, although we generally fished dry dropper. It was thus surprising that we caught less than the previous day - Neil 1, Dick 1, but “hallelujah” Mark broke his drought with one fish. Total fish, sadly only 13.

The Bell, Riflespruit and Sterkspruit were all unfishable for the duration of our stay.

Overall, I still just love this area for it’s beauty, peace and quiet and I hope to be able to return for many years to come. I’m sure that the more accomplished nymph fishermen would have fished better than us on the water, no names, no pack drill !!!!!



Monthly Meeting. Thursday 27th November. Umtentweni Tennis Club.

Present: 13 members. It was great to have Conner join us. He is back from the States for a five-month break.

Apologies: John, who is on walk-about in New Zealand, (Hope to get a full newsletter report on your fishing, when you get back John.) Pat, and Liam, Zander, Regan, Frank, Mike, S. and Toi.

FotM: Judged by Pieter vd Merwe and Sakkie.

Freshwater: **Zulu:** Sean, Pieter C. Steve, Arthur, Dick.

Saltwater: **Irish Blonde:** Pieter C. John, Steve, Dick, Sean, Mitch, Arthur.

Freestyle: Pieter C. (Red Spark,) Pieter C, (Purple Wing)

Coming Events:

See “Events Calendar” and “Coming Events” above.

General:

Dick and Neil gave a short report on their trip to Rhodes. Fishing was really tough in the dirty water that they encountered. (See report by Dick above.)

Dave is in the market for a suitable kick boat. Any advice on a supplier and pontoon sizes is welcome. As he is going down to the Breede River in December, he was advised to get onto the FOSAF website and look up some Garden Route Fly Fishers Club members in that area. Neil Malan is their normal correspondent. His contact details are: Cell number: 064 517 3811 and e-mail nmalan8@gmail.com Dave tried for scalies in the Umzimkulu River, earlier in the month, but was blown away by the wind.

It would appear that fly fishing is tough all round, as Pieter C., fished Impenjati and despite seeing shoals of fingerlings, (probably mullet,) all he got was the softest of touches, but alas, no cigar.

Sean reported that ex member, Jaco, had fished the B nationals in the Maclear district, with a modicum of success with the trout.

Fly fishing for tiger fish in the top end of Jozini dam, is apparently at present, really wild and consistent good catches are being reported.

Conner reported that he had neither the time nor the equipment to fly fish while in Florida, USA, but there the surf fishing is amazing. On the western shores of the peninsula, there are no waves at all and one can stand one metre from the edge of the water and catch tarpon in two-metre-deep-crystal-clear water.

Liam is back in Cosmo and has a busy time ahead with a full booking of clients for the next few weeks. If you think that fly tying materials are expensive here, Liam sells salt water streamer patterns for 70 US dollars each. That's a thousand Rand in Micky Mouse money!!! I am told that it is a hard life when you are rich. Piet vd M. is looking for dyed ostrich feathers; any colours. Contact him on 083 543 7005

Mitch has donated a “Gully Buggers” floating trophy for the club member who catches and records the most salt-water species from South African waters, in the SCFA competitive year.

He also reported that Colin Moolman is a contact in the Maclear district, from whom one can get an up-to-date report on weather and river conditions. Colin's contact number is 082 578 2048.

Steve reported that, although finances are slightly down on last year due to heavy sponsorship, he is not overly concerned and recons that by year end, we would once again be level pegging.

Christmas Bass outing to Steve's Dam. 29th November. By Arthur Cary.

Well, after the threat of early morning rain, we landed up with a really good turn-out of 21 members, family and friends for our Christmas outing. Steve had done a great job of preparing the verges and had even opened the outlet valve a few days before, in order to lower the water level and reduce the out-flow across our intended lunch spot. The weather actually played ball and apart from a very variable and gusty wind, it turned out to be a glorious morning.



All the activity around the dam, must have alerted the bass that a big event was being planned and apart from four fish, who were slow on the up-take, the remainder developed a serious case of lock-jaw and nothing that we could do, would make them open up.

Using kick boats to their advantage, Steve and Sean with one each and Neil with two fish were the lucky anglers, (*Correction: not "lucky anglers," the correct term is "skilful anglers." Ed.*) They used a popper, a chartreuse Fritz Bugger and an orange Papa Roach-type nymph, respectively. Conner, Warren, Mike S, Toi, Ken and Arthur paddled around aimlessly on kick boats, while David and his friend Elisa, Pieter C., Denel, Reagan, Zander and visitor, Dave Lambley, tried from the bank, also without landing a fish. Pieter C. had one good knock on a blue popper, but his tippet parted, Mr fish headed for the reeds and did not reappear.

Conner was nearly driven nuts by one individual that rose repeatedly two metres from him, showed him the middle fin and disappeared, only to repeat the exercise ten seconds later.

As Marion's fish carrying services were not required, she kept in Ken's good books, by helping him safely disembark from his float tube. No mean feat, I assure you.

Steve got the fire going on cue and Berlinda, Stacey, Dick and Mitch arrived to enjoy and finish a really enjoyable morning.

Fry, Fingerling and Stockie Stories.



The committee needs suggestions for the Fly of the Month competition in 2026. Drop me a line if you have something in mind. A list of flies that we have tied in the last few years will be sent out with the December newsletter, but remember we do not have to limit our selection to those. For any fly that we have not tied in the recent past, I will need a relevant photograph and an unambiguous recipe.

Last Cast.

A final and hearty Christmas wish to all our readers. May you have a Blessed Christmas and a Hearty New Year.

If you are travelling, "Hambani gahle" and if you are among the wise and staying put, "Salani gahle." I hope to see many of you at the next outing on Sunday 11th January 2026.

"Cheers." Arthur.

