



South Coast Fly Anglers



NEWSLETTER September 2025

Chairman: John New (078 203 4549) **Treasurer:** Stephen Brand (082 551 9010) **Secretary:** Dick Plaistow (082 453 8618)
Liaison and Records Clerk: Pieter vd Merwe (083 543 7005) **Scribe:** Arthur Cary (076 312 0417) **Member:** Neil Scott (083 265 6608)

Preparing to cast.

This month we have an extended Events Calendar, followed by a tongue in cheek article on how to beat the blank saltwater outings that SCFA members have experienced of late. Even our resilience has been tested to the limit. At least one scaly was netted on the outing to the Umzimkulu River and a well-attended monthly meeting, (at which we welcomed two new young members,) rounded off the last month of a long and cool winter; roll on Spring and Summer.

Coming Events

Date	Event	Venue	Time
September 7th	Saltwater outing	Ramsgate Big Tree Beach	Early
September 10th	Fly-tying workshop	Neil's home	18h15
September 25th	Monthly meeting	Umtentweni Tennis Club	18h00 for 18h30
September 28th	Bass outing	Voigt's Dam. Paddock	07h00
October 1st	Fly-tying workshop	Neil's home	18h15
October 1st	Grub 'n travel meeting	Neil's home	After the workshop
Oct 6th to Oct 10th	Saltwater outing	Cape Vidal	TBD
October 19th	Bass outing	Dunstone's Dam. Paddock	Early
30th October	Monthly meeting	Umtentweni Tennis Club	18h00 for 18h30

Coming Events:

Our first outing of the month is to the **Ramsgate Big Tree Beach, where we can fish the beach or the estuary from kick boats. This is on Sunday 7th September.** We will braai on the north bank, after fishing, so bring your meat and refreshments.

The **fly-tying workshop is at Neil's home on Wednesday 10th September.** The freshwater Zak and the saltwater Whistler are our two flies for this month. As usual, recipes have been sent to members. Hooks and beads will be supplied for the Zac and #6 hooks will be available for the Whistler. The other materials are pretty standard, so BYO, but if you do not have these, no problem. Come along to the workshop and BBoS (Beg, Borrow or Steal) from one of the regulars.

The **monthly meeting is at the Umtentweni Tennis Club on Thursday 25th September at 18h00 for 18h30.** No change to the agenda, with the braai afterwards. Flies to be judged are the freshwater Zac and the saltwater Whistler.

Our first Bass outing after the winter is to Voigt's Dam in Paddock on Sunday 28th September. As usual, the earlier you get there, the better your fishing will be. Steve will have his normal conflagration going, so bring your boerie and something cool to ease that tickle in the throat.

Our **fly-tying workshop in October** is a week earlier than usual, because of the proposed trip to Cape Vidal. **On the 1st October** we will tie the Hi-Viz-Midge and the Prince of Tide saltwater fly, at **Neil's home. Usual time of 18h00.** Recipes will be sent to SCFA members before the workshop.



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If you are interested in the **trip to Cape Vidal from 6th to 10th October, contact Neil immediately on (083 265 6608.)** We will be camping and Neil needs to know how many campsites to book.

Past Events.

“You should have been here yesterday.” Saltwater outing. By Arthur Cary.

Anglers in general, be they ski boat, rock and surf or those using fly rods, have all been told at some stage, “You should have been here yesterday. We absolutely nailed them!” This is especially true when fishing is particularly slow.

If a SCFA meeting had been held, which no one would have attended, it would have been decided to put this colloquial saying to the test and members would have been informed by Steve’s reliable SMS system, that we would gather on the “yesterday,” before the scheduled outing to Mzamba, with the express warning that this be kept strictly secret. We would not have wanted any of the weather Gods to get a hint of our devious plan, lest they put a spanner in the works, said spanner, of course, being gale force winds or the wrath of Thor, God of thunder, descending on us.

The “yesterday” would have finally dawned and SCFA members would have arrived at the entrance to the Wild Coast Casino in their droves, well before dawn, to be greeted by a sleepy and surprised gate guard, who would have asked, “You going fishing in the dark, now?” We would not have told her that the early rise was intentional, in order to catch the weather Gods by surprise. We know from previous experience that there is very seldom any weather before the sun gets up. The very rocky road down to the beach would have been negotiated with care; we would not have wanted to risk a cut tyre or a damaged shock absorber.

We would have parked well away from John’s Beach, (no donation to his Bizana mates this time,) rods would have been rigged by torch light and we would have set off down the sand track to the beach, just as the sun would have been popping up between a low bank of cloud and the horizon.

Conditions would have been near perfect, with the water surface being slightly ruffled by the off-shore wind. (Zephyrus, the God of the West Wind, would still have been snoring off the effects of a rollicking night spent with Venus, the Goddess of love.)

We would have spread out along the beach and would each have eagerly stripped off a good 30 metres of line, would have given 3 false casts and a short count to 3 after the sinking line settled, before beginning a slow jerk-strip. On the first cast there would have been nothing, another try and another and another... Was that a rock or was it a touch. Another cast and a repeat count, this time to ten. “Dash it all. Hooked that rock good and proper, but hang on, that rock seems to be moving away.” A dozen shouts of “Fish on” from the right and left would have indicated that we were all in for some serious fishing action.

Well, so it would have continued for another two and a half hours or so, by which time casting arms would have been aching and Thor would have been getting moody, away to the south. The various Gods of wind would also have been alerted to our activities and would have been beginning to make their presence felt.

I don’t think that we would have quite managed to emulate Bruce’s feat of 8 species on his outing to Rocky Bay, a while ago, but we would all have landed a good number of shad, big wave garrick and a variety of kingfish, before we would have retired to the shelter of the “car park” in the bush. **(If this story were not totally true and authentic, a few grunter, springer, bonito and dorado would have been added to the list, so you had better accept it as gospel!!!)**

Steve would soon have had the braai fire roaring and the whole company would have settled down to enjoy what remained of the “yesterday” morning and would have discussed the major benefits of going fishing “yesterday” instead of on the appointed day.

Saltwater outing to Mzamba. Sunday 10th August. By Arthur Cary.

Now to recount what actually happened on the outing to Mzamba on the day after “yesterday.” John, Sakkie and Arthur arrived at the parking bay to find that Steve and Rob had beaten them to it by a few minutes and were already on the beach. Here they were both heavily inclined to the south, in order to maintain their equilibrium against the howling wind. Someone in East London had certainly left the door open!!!



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Fishing was obviously totally out of the question, so we retired to the calm of the car park, where Steve got his trusty braai grid into action and we chewed the fat and had a good old chin wag and breakfast, downed of course with some appropriate liquid refreshments, before we went home.

One great advantage of an outing such as this, is that we did not have to wash our kit. That had had a real work-out and wash on “yesterday’s” outing.

Scaly outing to the Umzimkulu River . Sunday 24 August. By Sean Tharratt.

Sean, Steve and Piet vd M. met at the Lake Eland gate at 7:30am and made their way down to the river. Janick let us park inside his property at the Umzimkulu Game Farm at no cost. There is a parking spot next to the river, near his entrance. One does not need his permission to fish that section of river and it seems quite safe, as it is far away from any local houses.

The weather was good and the river water was nice and clean. Water temperature was cool, but not at all cold. The river level was also very manageable to fish in. We fished from the bank for a while, casting a few streamers across the river with no luck. Some sections were quite deep, from about one and a half metres and deeper.

Piet had some knee trouble and went back to the vehicle to recover. Steve and Sean fished a bit longer, when Steve decided he too had had enough with no bites and Sean fished for another hour till 11am. He then walked along the path, which goes along a fence and down to the small island and found a shallow, slow-flowing rapid and managed to get 1 scaly there, on a gold bead PTN.

There is definitely potential there and I think if more anglers fish there and try different methods and maybe some heavier flies, we will hopefully catch more fish,

Monthly Meeting. Thursday 25th September Umtentweni Tennis Club.

Present: 17 members, including new members Zander Swart, from Shelly Beach and Reagan Volschenk, from Margate. Welcome chaps and we hope that you really enjoy your trip with SCFA. It was good to see Andre and Domenick, back after a long absence.

Apologies: Ken and David, Warren, Sakkie and Mark.

FotM: Judged by Mike S.

Freshwater: **Stimulator:** Neil, Sean, Dick, Sean, Toi, Toi, John, Pieter C, Arthur and Dick.

Saltwater: **Tom’s Gully Fly:** Dick, John, Mitch, Sean, Arthur, Toi, Pieter C.

Freestyle: Sean, (Needle Nosed Bait Fish,) Pieter C. (Black Beetle,) Mitch (Simple Streamer,) Pieter C. (Red Wing Nymph.)

Coming Events: (See “Events Calendar” and “Coming Events” above.)

General.

John welcomed Zander and Reagan, adding that it was good to have extra young blood joining the club. As Rob remarked, the addition of these chaps, has probably lowered the average age of membership by 10 years! Both youngsters are pretty new into fly fishing, but under the guidance of our more experienced members, they will blossom, that is if they attend the various outings that are offered.

Although Andre and Domenick have not attended a meeting since March this year, due to the demands of school work, (*so they say. Ed.*) the Master at Arms had not forgotten that they both had outstanding fines from 2024. They did not dispute the unanimous verdict of “Guilty” and will sort the resulting finances out with Treasurer, Steve, at a later date.

Sean gave a short account of the scaly outing to the Umzimkulu River. (See article above.) This was followed by a lively discussion on whether it was better to fish nymphs right on the bottom, or slightly off the bottom. Conclusion: Although fish will be caught on dry flies, as well as all the way down the depth scale to the river bed, bottom fishing will normally yield the most fish, as this is the zone in which most food is found.



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Neil mentioned that he had spent a few days up at St. Lucia and at Cape Vidal, but had only landed a couple of wave garrick. Strong winds and dirty water had been a persistent problem. On the one day at Vidal the beach was littered with the remains of small bait fish. Shad had obviously been feeding on these behind the backline, resulting in bait anglers also not having any luck.

Steve reported that club finances, are still in a very healthy state, thanks partly to an injection of nearly R 3000.00 from the sale of books and equipment, donated by the late John Gibbon. Dick has recently spent a hefty amount of cash on hooks and beads for the Flies of the Month competition, but thanks to Steve keeping a beady eye on things financial, the bank balance remains resilient.

Fry, Fingerling and Stockie Stories.



At the July monthly meeting, Mitch requested that the recipe for the Surf Candy be revised to include a keel, which will prevent the fly from spinning when being retrieved.

This matter was discussed at the last fly-tying workshop. Because suitable photos of the fly, in the colours that we want, are not readily available, it was decided that Neil would tie a suitable specimen, and this, together with a re-worded recipe, would be circulated to SCFA members. The addition of a keel would be optional, as not all members agreed that spinning was a problem.

Last Cast.

Nope, I have nothing to add., but hope to see you on the water and at the coming fly-tying workshop and monthly meeting.

Cheers. Arthur.

