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Trout Are Not Gay  
Juvie  
Farmponds  
Bonefish in the Morning  
SCOFartist in Residence- Paul Puckett

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THE ENDLESS  
SUMMER OF SQUATCH  
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Grow your own scarf.

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**loon**  
outdoors





From the Editor's desk...  
to your bathroom

Summer 2013

Summer in the South sometimes gets a bad wrap. Don't get me wrong -- it's hot. Real hot. I live in the mountains and it's still too hot. How hot is it, you ask? It's so hot that every, "It's so hot...." joke seems asinine because it's so f 'n hot. But amongst the humidity and sweaty crotches resides the true jewel of summer in the South -- choice. Bass in the ponds and rivers, carp on the flats and marinas, striper in the river mouths and on the lights, redfish on low tide mud flats and high tide grass, and tailwater trout, well, everywhere. You get where I'm going with this, right? There is no other season where the smorgasbord of options is as plentiful as during the dog days of the

summer. A man (or a lady for that matter) might get a wild hair up his ass and go on a three-day shame spiral trip fishing trout, bass and salt with nothing more than Jagermeister, a borrowed boat and the foggy memories of summer's past to fuel his Sherman-like tear through the Southeast scene. This is hypothetical of course, I am not planning this as we speak...I repeat not planning this. But to those of you who seem to find yourselves filled with wild hairs once the summer solstice passes, a few words of advice: Wear plenty of sunscreen, pack clean underwear, and never, never taunt a Sasquatch. You've seen those commercials, right?

*Haiku*

*with  
Brad Bohem*



*Predator Awaits*

*Fly Meets Water  
and Danger*

*I Am Breathless*

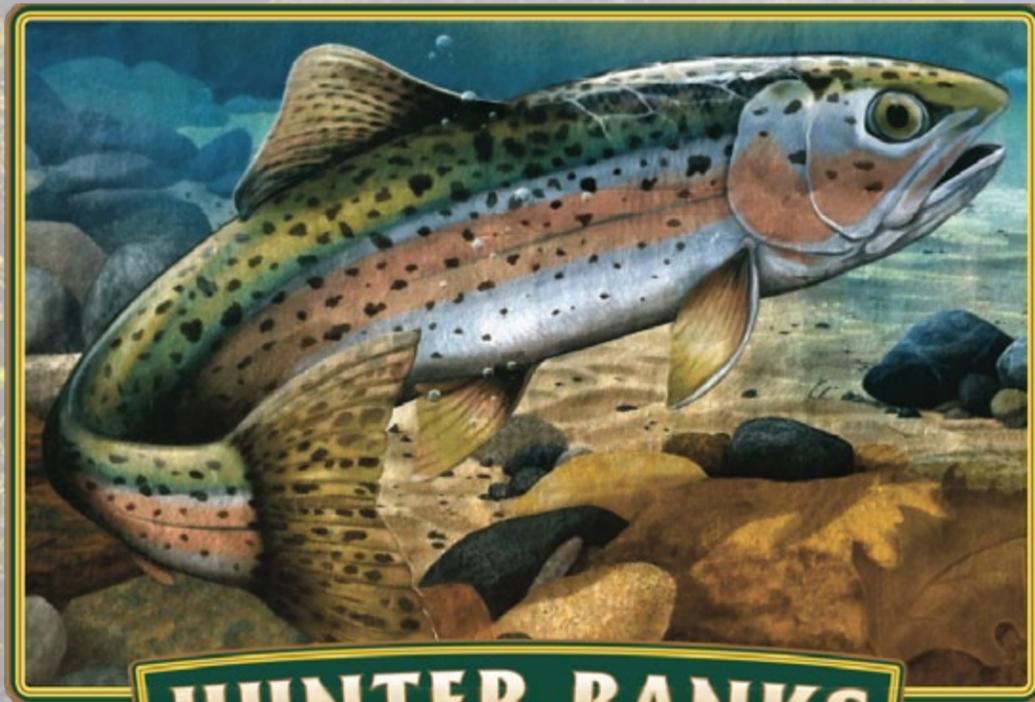


## SKEPTICS NO MORE

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A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a silver fish, likely a trout or salmon, over a body of water. The fish is held horizontally, with its head to the right and tail to the left. The person's hands are visible, with the left hand supporting the fish from underneath and the right hand holding it from above. The fish's scales are highly reflective, showing iridescent colors. The background is a blurred green forest, and the water below is dark and reflects the fish and the person's hands.

# JUNIE

NOT GIVING ANDREA THE SATISFACTION

photos:  
Steve Seinberg  
Cole Fairbanks

Gasparilla Island, FL ...visibility on the flats sucks..the big fish seem to be moving off to avoid the tropical storm *Andrea*. Like my eighth-grade girlfriend of the same name, the storm is being a little bit of a tease. The main body of the storm isn't quite here yet, and there are black water ponds, canals and backcountry creeks loaded with a veritable brackish water cornucopia. A 6wt and baby tarpon explosions sounds perfect.

*"Mini"lops Atlanticus*





















*Capt. Cole "Big Daddy" Fairbanks usually puts his clients on much bigger tarpon. But when Steve showed up he feared a big boy might break Steve. Steve is thankful. Check out Cole at [www.truefliescharters.com](http://www.truefliescharters.com)*



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# FUR AND FEATHER MATINEE



Brian Wise



WHITLOCK'S  
SHEEP MINNOW



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# TROUT AREN'T GAY AND NEITHER AM I

NOT THAT THERE IS ANYTHING WRONG WITH THAT

By David Grossman





At some point in the last few years, “trout” has become a dirty word among my friends. I’m not sure when or why this happened but, judging by the look of disgust on my friends faces whenever I suggest the notion of looking for risers or floating a river that’s not bathtub warm, it’s happened. I mean, honestly, you’d think I was suggesting we all sit in a circle Indian-style for a round of sexually awkward show and tell. It’s reverse fish-ism in its most insidious form, and I, for one, am tired of living in shame. I’ll say it loud and I’ll say it proud, “I fly fish for trout and I don’t care who knows it!”

So in order to inspire my other trout fishing brethren out of the so-called salmo trutta closet, I feel it’s time that someone stand up for trout since they can’t stand up for themselves (no legs and all).

It wasn’t always this way. I used to be able to walk into the bar and proudly pronounce that I netted a 20-inch trout on a size-20 fly. Not only would I be respected for my accomplishment, I would be revered like a warrior of old (some awe-inspiring shit a twenty on a twenty used to be). These days, my accomplishment is cast aside like common refuse and I have to endure more talk of flats and toothy critters.



I understand that catching a musky on a fly is a pretty damn special accomplishment in the career of any fly flinger (one I have yet to achieve myself, damnit) but there's only so many conversations I can take about the finer points of the figure-eight versus the hi/lo oval. The boredom of throwing a 10-weight for days on end without seeing a fish starts to creep into the conversation, and before I know it my thoughts are turning back to my trout, my abundant and catchable trout. I guess the older I get and the less time I have to fish, the more I actually like to catch fish. What a novel concept, huh? Going fishing with a reasonable expectation of catching fish.

Trout don't live in ugly places. We've all heard it and I've said it on countless guide trips to rubes that eat up that sort of cliché. The opposite side of this coin is, carp do live in ugly places. There is no denying I see way more empty 40s, hypodermic needles and used prophylactics on the carp flats I frequent than my beloved trout streams (well, marginally more anyway...clean up your shit, people). I also won't deny that seeing a double-digit golden-bone Hoover a fly and explode is enough to make a grown man go weak in the knees, but the homeless hepatitis patient under the bridge or the dick on the jet ski does tend to detract from the overall experience. Give me a quiet trout stream any day. Hell, give me a marginally crowded trout stream, because jet skis suck. I mean, if you own a jet ski you should be dragged out into the street and beaten for your stupidity as an example to the idiots on your block that own jet skis.



The last argument I will make in my treatise on the defense of trout is that there are no tides involved. When I say tides, I also mean grey skies. The requirements for a good saltwater fishing trip are many, none of which you have any control over. The requirements are so stringent that I now don't even head to the coast unless I have four days to pursue my query. This time commitment doesn't stem from a place of greed, rather a place of practicality. In a four-day saltwater trip, the weather is going to suck at least three of those days. And if you are uninitiated in the saltwater game, when the weather sucks, the bar is always open. I have never been more hungover than on saltwater trips. It's not so much a joyous celebratory drunk; it's more like a drunk of despair and hopelessness as you look at a radar screen that just keeps puking up primary colors for days on end. Trout eat when it rains, you don't have to see them to catch them. Conditions aren't always perfect, but I guarantee there are a lot more good trout days to be had through the course of a season than good salt days.





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Trout may be popular among the masses, but this disturbing counter-trout movement that is developing in the dank basements, dive bars and methadone clinics of the South is starting to gain a foothold. Self-respecting trout fisherman have to stand up now and proclaim that trout are just as cool as any other fish and we are in no way inferior because we choose to fish 6X.

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# FARM PONDS

Story: Mike Sepelak

Photos: Cameron Mortensen and Steve Seinberg





## It smells of Southern summer.

Sticky sweet scents of fresh-mown fields, fragrant honeysuckle, and moist cow pies. Dixie tang so thick you might swim in it. Antebellum aromas anchored in the oppressive heat and humidity of Carolina's pungent pressure cooker.

July.

Grasshoppers rise from our feet and fly before us, helicoptering heralds, scattering in waves, pushed as if by wind, though there's not a blessed breath. Lord, we could use one. The kids chase the whirlies without restraint, oblivious to the stifle, leg-whipping weeds, and bovine landmines. Thank God for their rubber boots.

Ol'e Bessie looks up from her browse. Unimpressed.

In the back corner of Old Man Johnson's pasture it sits, roughly triangular; near to two acres of rain-fed respite. The longest shore lies open to sun, shallow edged, well-trodden, marked deep with the hoof prints of countless drinks and cooling cattle dips. It's mostly mudflat, but an easy avenue for lowing, lumbering loads to retreat from the heat. You could lose a shoe, or worse, in the red clay mire when approaching from this side. I can testify.



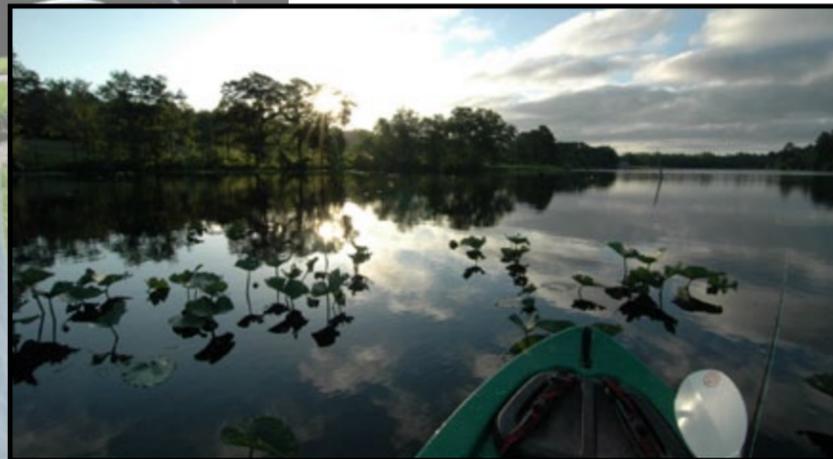


At midday, the short shore, too, sears in summer's swelter, though it's deeper of bank and goes undisturbed by the herd. Cattails rise out of duckweed and lily, bright green water simmering like a pot of Momma E's butterbeans. Turtles and bullfrogs rise, then fall, like chunks of fatback in the slow boiling soup; cooked to dang-near mush, like Momma, and we boys, liked them. Her big slotted spoon would strain bass, like beans, rolling under the steaming surface.

We look, though, to the third bank. Deepest of the three, five feet of sweet-tea water and refuge beneath a canopy of white oak, remnants of a field break planted long before I was a twinkle. It's here that the kids stop, instinctively, bank worn to dirt by generations of brogans, bare feet, and upturned buckets. There might as well be a sign.







Ragged pieces of styrofoam hide in the weeds, torn from the carcasses of ancient bait boxes, beer coolers, and greasy spoon takeout, discolored white forms like small faded skeletons of field mice or 'coon or possum. Scattered scraps of Redman, Lucky Strike, swear to this ground's tobacco heritage; tatters as discolored by years as the golden leaf at suckering time and the teeth of those who partook. Other things, too. Random, senseless, detritus. A sock. A torn seven of hearts. A doll's head and rusted old 9-iron. Undecipherable items that speak to this pond's past in a language we don't understand; drawl so thick it drips like sorghum. We pack out what we can but the relics lie deep, rising in layers after each summer storm like repressed rural memories and family secrets. Fisherman's flotsam.

A cool bead of sweat trickles down my back.

I set aside my glass 3wt, a New South nod to the venerable cane pole, and check the kid's Zebcos. They'll fly fish in time, Lord willin', but I'll start them as slow as a late summer yawn. For now, one hook in the air is enough. In their cage, the crickets chirp happily, yet unaware of their roll in this outing, though most will be released to the fields as young attention fades from fishing to the divination of creatures and shapes in rolling clouds and the surrounding kudzu topiary.

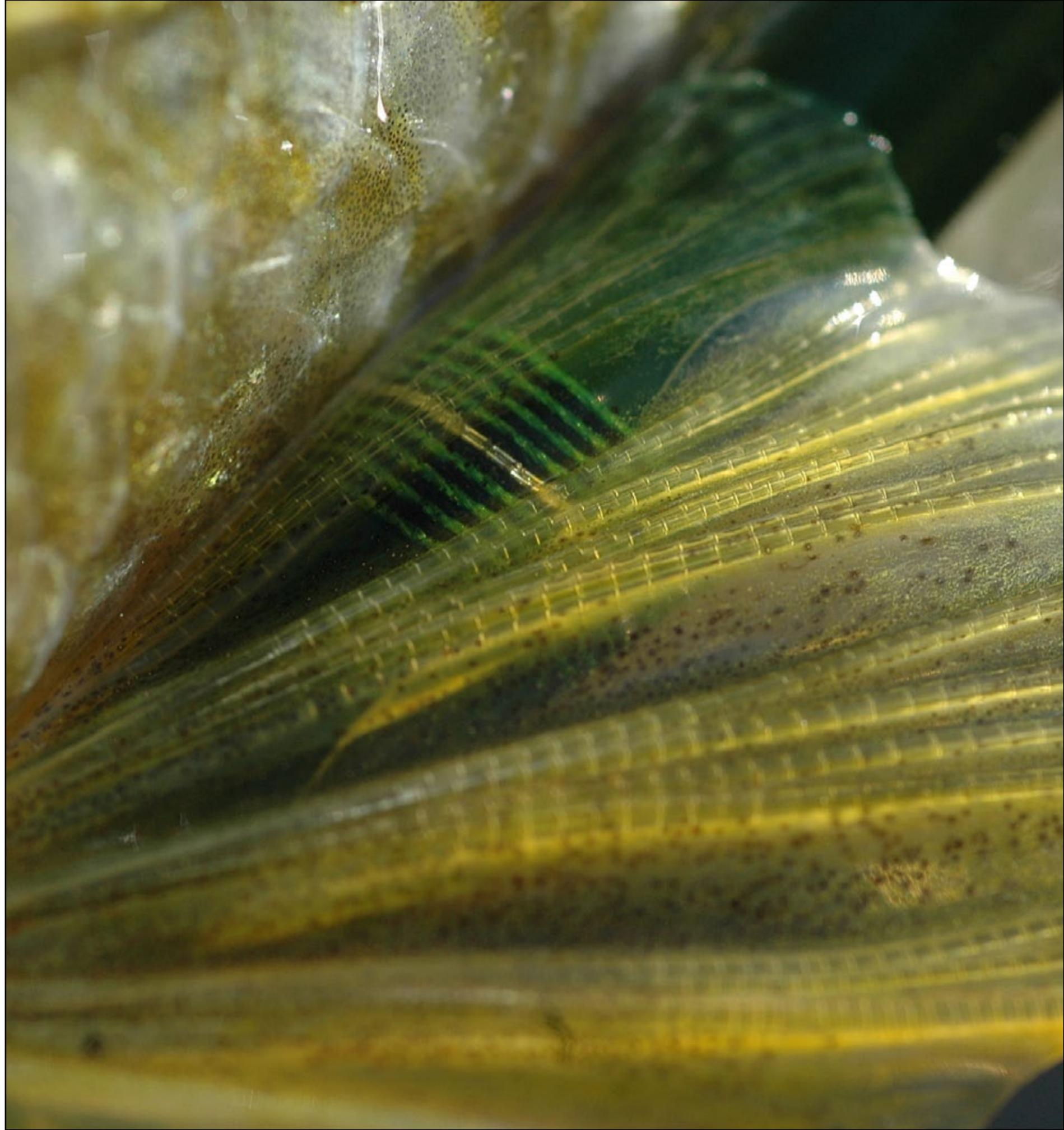




But for awhile, they're into it. Bluegill, red-breast, greenies, crappie. If bream grew to be five pounds, I stay away from these waters. Pond piranha, they are, as they nip at freckles and moles while you take a cooling dip. On crickets, they're brutal, and the kids happily pull myriad bits of brilliant sunshine from the stained waters.

I leave the 3wt alone, choosing instead to lie back and look across farmland, little changed from the time that it was the Blue and the Gray, not the Red and the Blue, that pulled our country apart. The Confederacy lives in humidity and scents, in steamy farm ponds, if not in its politics, and the new rebel in me is okay with that. Collards, chard, and turnip greens keep the South alive well enough, I believe.

In time, the sun drops and the short-shore bass begin to rise as long shadows creep their way. But the kids are done. That's why we're out here, after all, so I'll get ol' bucketmouth another day. He's got nowhere go. We follow the herd back to the barn at a more leisurely pace for we're short one bright rubber boot. It will, no doubt, turn up again, years from now, as yet another mysterious layer of pond archaeology emerges for those who take the time to look.



But, for now, it's home to check for ticks and have a good scrub for the redbugs.

The Southern way.

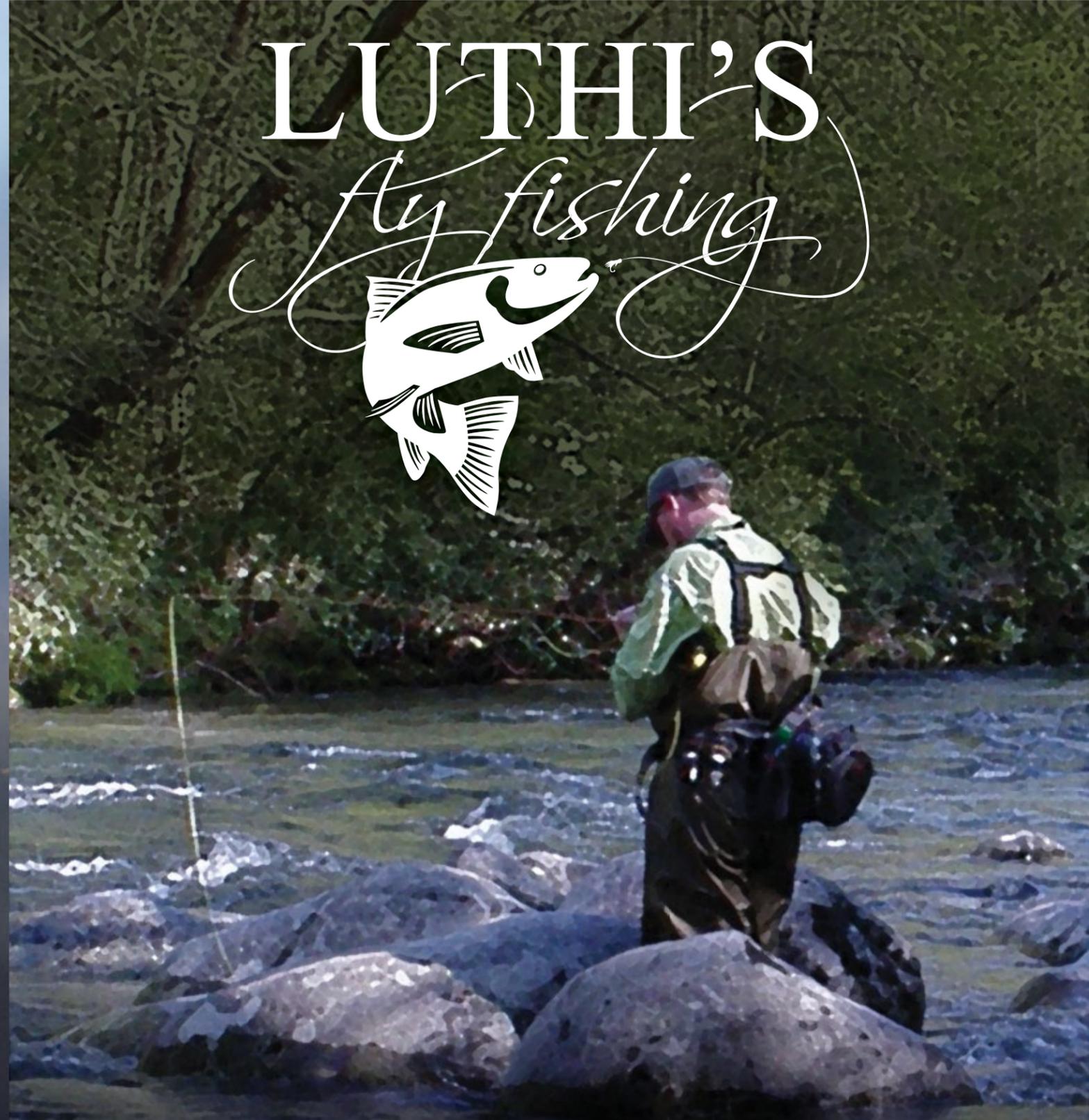


Mike Sepelak writes in a way I wish I thought. We have not fished together yet but when we do I will have him recite me his prose by the stream bank, while I cast dry flies wearing a Tilley hat. Check out more of Mike's writing and photography at [www.mikesgonefishing.com](http://www.mikesgonefishing.com)



# LUTHI'S

*Fly fishing*

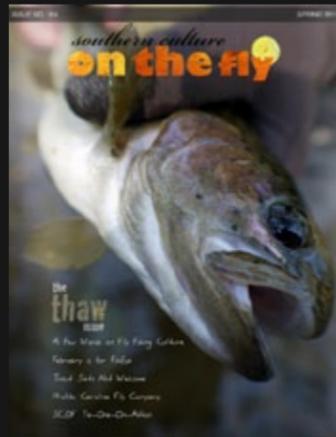


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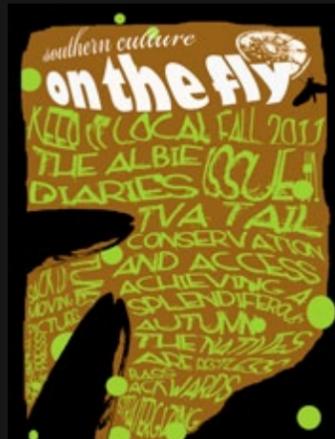
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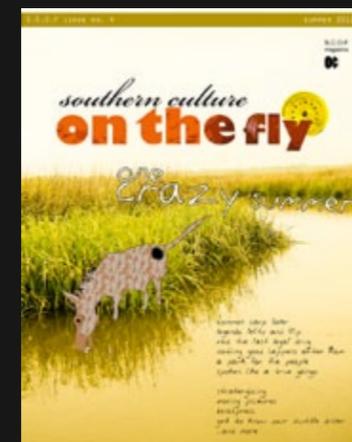
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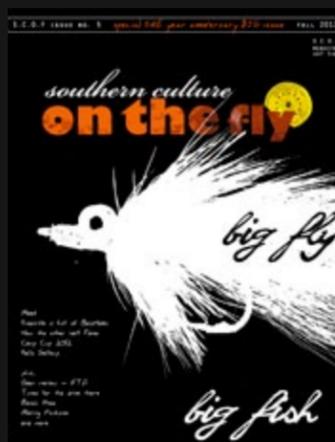
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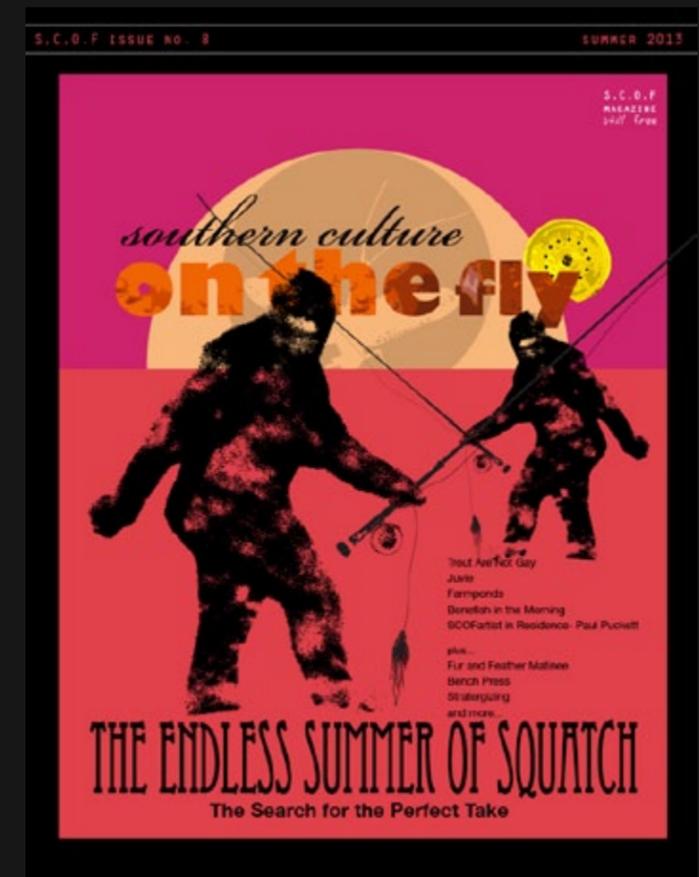
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# SCOF *Artist in Residence*

PAUL PUCKETT



Photos: Steve Seiberg

Art doesn't have to be pre-tentious to merit praise,

and Paul is one the most unpretentious people let alone artists I know (and I know at least three artists so stop snickering). With a portfolio that includes everything from large scale oil paintings to free hand sketches of Dirty Harry gripping and well... scowling a kyped up brown. I was first drawn to the accessibility of Paul's art which often does a poor job of masking Paul's wacked out sense of humor (which just happens to complement mine quite nicely), but once you get know Paul and his work you quickly realize that the guy sitting in front of you, with the Coors heavy, is probably the most artistically diverse and talented guys in the scene today. We were lucky enough to have Paul spend a couple of days at the SCOF office (which actually is a painting studio) putting paint and pen to a variety of things. The best thing about it was he didn't even steal anything...we checked.











*To see more of Paul's work check out his website: [paulpuckettart.com](http://paulpuckettart.com), or you can find his images on such fine shirts as True Flies, Patagonia, Vedavoo, and his own company Flood Tide Co. Or he can often be found at the Low Country Fly Shop chained to the wall, behind a stack of Cliff Boxes, high on Sharpies, and being paid very little or nothing at all for the whole thing.*



**Fish Porn:**  
n. video or  
photography  
featuring fish

The mere notion of fish porn is ridiculous. Fish lack all the tangible features that make porn desirable. No breasts, an absence of fun plots in their lovemaking, exterior genitalia, etc. Female fish spew eggs and male fish, well, they just spew. At best this could be called softcore fish porn, and I for one think softcore porn sucks.





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**BENCH PRESS**

*Thomas Harvey*



*EP Minnow*

## Materials List:

Hook: Short Shank

Thread: Monofilament

Body: EP 3D Minnow Fibers

Eyes: 3D Adhesive

Glue: CA (Liquid and Gel)

Other: Thinning Shears

I am Thomas' EP Minnow. I swim, I dart, I dance, I get bit. I like to be trimmed and tied sparsely. I get angry when too much fiber is strapped on me. When I'm angry I swim like poo. I speak with an Italian accent. My hook rides down and a little to the left depending on how I'm tied. I make sparkling masculine. I am just as manly as a Clouser. I am way more manly than a Deceiver. If I could drive a car it would be the General Lee...the old one. I am Thomas' EP Minnow.

EP Minnow



1. Select a short shank, heavy hook. (For Reference: This fly is tied on a Gamakatsu SC17)



2. Start your mono thread behind the hook eye and lay a thread base to the beginning of the hook bend.



3. Pick a sparse bundle of EP fibers. Split that amount in half ... then once more ... nope, still too much. The worse thing you can do with this style fly is to use too much material. Bind this material down in the middle of the hank ensuring the fibers stay on the top half of the hook shank.



4. Invert your hook and repeat the process with your belly color. Again, less is more.



**5. Wrap forward one eye length (as a general rule).**



**6. Stroke the fibers towards the rear of the fly. Make a few wraps on top of the fibers ensuring they stay facing rearward. For durability you may choose to add a bit of brushable superglue to this tie in point.**



**7. Repeat the same process using sparse bunches of EP fiber ...**



**8. Until you reach the head. Whip finish and secure with another coat of brushable superglue.**



**9. Brush the fly to free any tangles or matted fibers.**



**10 Using a pair of long bladed, serrated scissors give the fly a rough shape.**



**11. To prevent bulk, thin out the fly using shears.**



**12. Apply eyes using gel superglue. Refine the final shape with scissors and the fly is complete.**



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# BONEFISH IN THE MORNING

Story: Mad Mike Benson  
Photos: Louis Cahill



The alarm went off early. Early by normal-people-in-the-real-world standards, and absurdly early by Bahamian standards. The house was quiet except for the snoring from my dad and brother-in-law. To be fair, I told them I was going bonefishing in the morning. However, if my dad can't kill it and eat it he's not interested, and my brother-in-law doesn't fly fish, his only real downfall, so I really didn't want them to go with me. If that makes me a bad person, then so be it.



I've been coming to this island since I was a kid. I know every road on the island, all three of them, and every flat reachable by land, so roaming around in the dark wasn't exactly an imposing proposition. Our Jeep, a pink 1967 Kiser, was out of commission so I had to resort to "White Lightnin'", a poorly geared beach cruiser. The flat I had in mind was on the opposite end of the island, and low tide was scheduled for right at daybreak. That meant a pleasant ride across a mosquito infested swamp in the dark to hopefully find some tailing fish in the early light.

The ride was actually pretty nice, except for running into a local, and his rabid-ass dog. I guess he was out trying to catch crabs. At least that's what I hope a Rastafarian looking dude carrying a machete accompanied by a rabid-ass pitbull, wandering around on the deserted end of an infamous drug smuggling island was doing an hour before first light.... Yeah, he was hunting crabs.





Despite the obstacles, I arrived at the access point for the flat, a gap in the mangroves that looks like it was made by a runaway bulldozer, just before first light. My plan was to just chill out on dry land until there was enough light to spot fish. Soon after arriving, however, my plans changed. The hoard of mosquitos biting through my shirt convinced me to take a little walk out onto the dark flat, as far away from the mangroves as possible into the light predawn breeze. The plan worked and the attack was reduced to a mild annoyance. Eventually the sun started to rise, and I found myself just standing still, admiring the beauty of the impending morning. If you've never seen the sunrise over a Caribbean island, I pity you. It's a moment in time where you feel altogether isolated, while at the same time tied into the very bedrock of the earth. The hues of red and pink seem to seep into your soul and illuminate everything. If at any point in your life you felt at peace, you would question it standing shin-deep on a bonefish flat at sunrise.

My moment of reverence was interrupted, however, by movement to my right. Even in the low light I could make out a bonefish tailing less than 50 feet away from me. I wish I could tell you I knew exactly how big he was, and made some superhuman effort to make him eat, but the fact of the matter is that while I have seen quite a few bonefish in my day, I still have no idea how to predict size by just looking at their tails, so I treated this fish like every other three-pound fish I've ever cast to. My first cast went unnoticed, and my second as well. My third cast was met with the same vehemence as that rabid pitbull seemed to have for the pedals of White Lightning'.





A quick strip set, and the fish was headed toward the rising sun. The first run was long and strong, like any other bonefish that's ever felt the bite of steel in his lip. The second indicated I had a good fish. The third run just confused me. I had never,

- a) Had a fish run me this far into my backing. And,
- b) Never had one do it repeatedly.

About 20 minutes after hooking the fish I got my first look at him. It was at this point that every sphincter in my body constricted simultaneously. The fish gliding toward my shaking hands was 31 inches and 10 pounds of grey ghost. Standing all alone in the predawn light, admiring this fish, all I could think of was how much I wish I had somebody to show this fish off to. But once that fish was resting in my hands, I felt no need to seek approval from any outside source. This fish was beautiful. Big, firm, and defiant to the end, she never gave me the sense that I had defeated her, only that I had distracted her from her normal morning routine. After removing the fly and a few reviving strokes, she made a strong kick and then moved away from me toward the rising sun with an attitude of defiance. No matter the importance I placed upon this fish, the world kept turning and the sun continued to rise. All my bravado and adrenaline was washed away in the early morning incoming tide. I was at peace with the world, if only for just a moment.

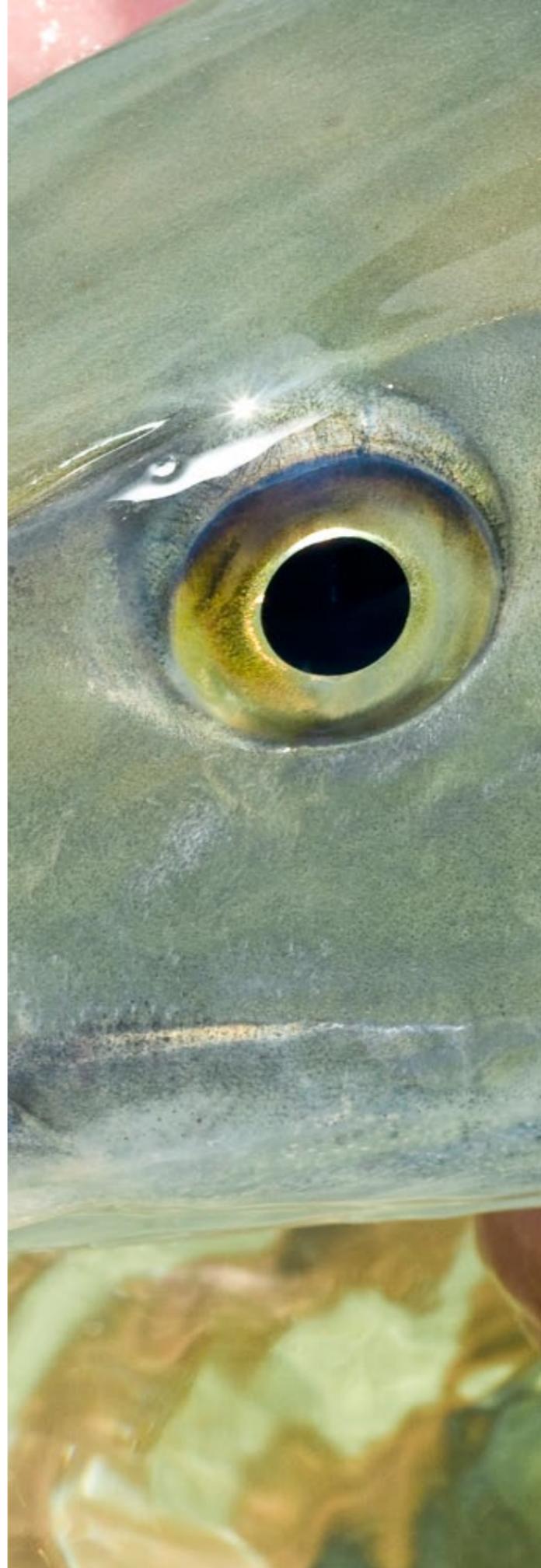




As the morning progressed, I managed a few more nice fish, and then a thunderstorm forced me off the flat and into a Hail Mary ride on White Lightnin' across the island, back to the house. I arrived, riddled with mosquito bites, and carrying the shit-eating grin of a man satisfied only to find the family just getting up and moving around. "Where have you been?" was my greeting.

**"Bonefishing"** was my reply.

*"Mad" Mike Benson knows how to de-fribillate someone. This skill comes in handy with the revolving parade of dirt-bags that call Mike's Charleston couch home at some time or another.*



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# Calhoun's Carpings: By the Numbers





Up until last year's 3 Rivers Carp Cup, few anglers residing outside of the greater Knoxville area had heard of Calhoun's restaurant on Knoxville's waterfront. But when the restaurant garnered direct mention as being strictly taboo and off limits during the tournament, not to mention the fact that it was spitting distance from the Cup's headquarters at the Outdoor Knoxville Adventure Center, word began to spread.



There were more than a few post-tourney grumbles from a subset of participants who complained that the winning strategy, which consisted of fishing marinas along the Tennessee River almost exclusively, was akin to Henry Winkler bragging about catching a 26-inch pellet pig brown from the manicured grounds of Blackberry Farm in an interview in *Fly Rod & Reel*. That this strategy trounced all others in terms of numbers and size of fish caught suggests that competition carp anglers need to pay attention. Make no mistake; I understand the complaint to a degree. A large carp pulled from a flat on a fly mimicking a natural prey item is far more rewarding than that same fish pulled from the docks downtown. But at the end of the day, the only rule when carp fishing is to have a good time. What's more, a big fish in urban quarters is a formidable quarry that will test your equipment (I've spent a lot of dough on rod repair as a result of Calhoun's restaurant).

### **The Game Plan**

As with all pictorial pursuits, there is great temptation to wade right into the thick of things where the action is assumed to be hot...and more often than not, Calhoun's is hot. When the water temperatures are right, the carp bite can be downright ridiculous. Nevertheless, there's strategy involved in catching truly trophy carp in excess of 25 pounds and doing it consistently in tight urban quarters. A fact that is even more poignant provided you recognize that common carp possess a chemically mediated social network where pheromones dictate much of their behavior, particularly alarm responses evolved to reduce predation risk. A subpar strategy along the waterfront can result in broken rods and broken hearts. If you're going to do it, why not do it right?

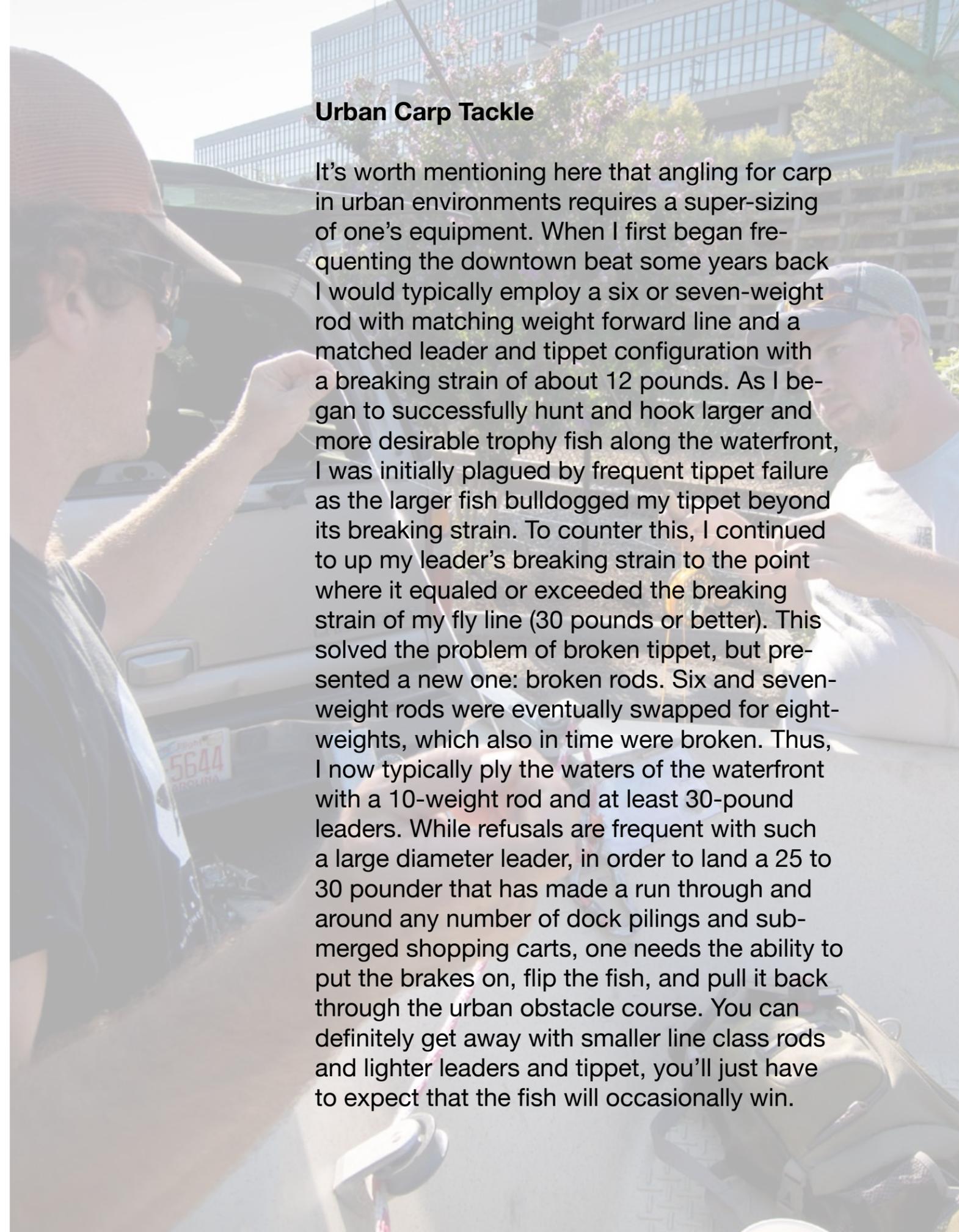
The waterfront along Neyland Drive is a carp haven. Within a half-mile stretch from just below the train trestle, to the south of Calhoun's, to just above the Gay Street Bridge, there are three restaurants and two creek mouths. While the body of water you are on is technically Fort Loudoun Lake, the area is just a scant few miles from the confluence of the Holston and French Broad Rivers, both of which are tailwaters with regulated flows. What this means is that on any given Sunday, there may be 4,000 cfs or 55,000 cfs pulsing through a sec-

tion of river that is only about 250 yards wide. You've got to use this flow to your advantage if you want to catch more than a handful of fish, and that means starting your outing below the train trestle at the mouth of 2nd Creek as it emerges beneath the Lady Vols Rowing Team's clubhouse and working your way upstream to the mouth of 1st Creek above the Star of Knoxville. An upstream direction will minimize the impact of the alarm pheromones from caught and released fish and thus increase your catch rate.



## Urban Carp Tackle

It's worth mentioning here that angling for carp in urban environments requires a super-sizing of one's equipment. When I first began frequenting the downtown beat some years back I would typically employ a six or seven-weight rod with matching weight forward line and a matched leader and tippet configuration with a breaking strain of about 12 pounds. As I began to successfully hunt and hook larger and more desirable trophy fish along the waterfront, I was initially plagued by frequent tippet failure as the larger fish bulldogged my tippet beyond its breaking strain. To counter this, I continued to up my leader's breaking strain to the point where it equaled or exceeded the breaking strain of my fly line (30 pounds or better). This solved the problem of broken tippet, but presented a new one: broken rods. Six and seven-weight rods were eventually swapped for eight-weights, which also in time were broken. Thus, I now typically ply the waters of the waterfront with a 10-weight rod and at least 30-pound leaders. While refusals are frequent with such a large diameter leader, in order to land a 25 to 30 pounder that has made a run through and around any number of dock pilings and submerged shopping carts, one needs the ability to put the brakes on, flip the fish, and pull it back through the urban obstacle course. You can definitely get away with smaller line class rods and lighter leaders and tippet, you'll just have to expect that the fish will occasionally win.





With respect to flies, you'll want to keep it simple. By that I mean there is only really one fly you will need in your box: Carp Crack. The Carp Crack fly came about by honest means when a fellow Dutch Carp Enthusiast mentioned to me in passing once that most Dutch anglers simply use glo bugs or roe patterns to trick European carp. Armed with this bit of knowledge, I twisted up some oversized glo bugs tied with McFly Foam in the Oregon Cheese color. Carp Crack works equally well in urban environments and flats situations. While early on I tied most of my Carp Crack on a Tiemco 2457 hook (size 6) , which are fine for fish in open water, I soon found that in order to handle larger fish in these urban confines, I needed to up my hook status to the beefier Tiemco 800s. You will want to tie your flies in a variety of configurations and sink weights in order to fish the entirety of the water column. While the majority of fish will be caught at the surface, after an extended and successful outing when the fish have been pushed down into sanctity of deeper water, they can still be caught fishing a Carp Crack on the bottom.





## Knoxville's Urban Carp Beat

All carp are omnivores and by nature opportunistic. Nowhere is this truer than in urban environments like downtown Knoxville's waterfront. Carp typically locate food with their discriminatory sense of smell which has been reported to be more sensitive than a bloodhound's. While this trait is important along the waterfront with the presence of a number of restaurants, Knoxville's urban carp are visual predators. Due to dense population, it doesn't have the luxury of casually following scent trails to nutrients and instead relies on its large eyes. The fly angler must use this to his or her advantage. Moving from the south end of the urban carp beat to the north look for scum lines which will form at the mouth of second creek or along the northern bank of the river. Fish can be found foraging along the scum with their attention on the surface and a well-placed fly will quickly entice an eat.

Contrary to the typical trout weenies proselytization that carp are ignorant trash fish, it has been shown that carp actually exhibit what is characterized as the interspecific social facilitation of learning to associate a visual cue with food. In other words, Knoxville's urban carp have learned to associate other species with the presence of food. Knoxville's downtown is rife with a new plague, urban waterfowl, and where you find ducks and geese looking for a handout, you are sure to find carp. As you make your way north along the river, keep a keen eye out for waterfowl of any size and color as they make their rounds foraging for food. More often than not, they'll have an opportunistic carp or two making the rounds with them.



As you approach the downriver portion of Calhoun's docks, you'll want to hug tight to the bank within casting distance of the riprap which lines the shore. When not feeding on handouts from patrons on Calhoun's outside deck, fish will cruise the riprap in search of any nutrition which may have become lodged among the rocks. Following this course will also ultimately lead you directly into the lower portion of the docks below Calhoun's southwest corner. This is where the stairs leading down to the docks deposit families with leftovers looking to feed the ducks and fish. As such, it isn't typically a big fish haunt, but still receives its fair share of fish cruising into and out of the area on their routine cycle in search of handouts. If no one is present at the bottom of the stairs actively feeding fish, it's still a good idea to stake out and try to pick off a fish or two as they cruise into the zone in singles and pairs. Done properly and in conjunction with a solid flow from upstream, several fish can be caught prior to moving upstream to the Big Pig Zone.

### **Here Piggy, Piggy**

The Big Pig Zone lies just beneath the outdoor seating area on Calhoun's ample deck. On warm summer days, with the deck filled to its limit, patrons ply the waters below with copious amounts of fries, potato skins and bread. The best approach for fishing this section is from your boat along the outer edge of the dock. But, be forewarned that a



hooked fish will often make a beeline for the deeper waters of the river's main channel. The resulting chaos can be detrimental not only to your fly line, but the top sections of your fly rod as well. For this reason, many anglers choose instead to bring their boat in from the upstream section on the inside of the docks approaching from beneath the belly of Calhoun's. While this may at times negate your upstream advantage, during periods of higher flows an eddy actually may form on the backside of the dock resulting in a reversed flow with this approach that will at least temporarily allow you some protection from pheromone contamination and permit you to pull more than a few carp from the Big Pig Zone in relatively rapid succession.

At some point, you will succeed in putting most if not all of the carp in the area down. With the water teeming with pheromones, daring carp will still occasionally dart to the surface for a quick look where an astute angler may still trick; the best course of action is to continue upstream to have a poke around the Star of Knoxville, the paddle wheel boat positioned just northeast of the Gay Street Bridge. Like Calhoun's, the Star of Knoxville is a restaurant with its kitchen located on the permanently moored barge where passengers embark upon the vessel. The kitchen staff is in the habit of feeding the fish between the two walkways leading to the barge, and as a result, there's always a huge population of fish positioned just out of reach. It is also home to the largest fish in the downtown area. The problem lies in the layout of the area which is restricted by moorings cables, pilings and power lines. What's worse, the paddle boat crew is hostile to

all anglers and the captain is a curmudgeon on his best days. If caught fishing the section of the river between the bank and the barge in search of a goliath carp, you will likely be accosted by the good Captain with threats of calls to Homeland Security. Fear not, however, as the Captain, despite his protests, is in the wrong and you are perfectly within your right to fish these waters.

If you're like me and prefer your outings to be as conflict-free as possible, then your best bet is to park your boat along the docks and take a drink and dinner break at the restaurant. This will give the fish below the restaurant time to rest and recover, and if you're lucky, it will also coincide with the evening dinner cruise on the Star of Knoxville. With the riverboat gone, and now armed with the leftovers from your meal, you are well-positioned to mop up the remaining fish of the day.

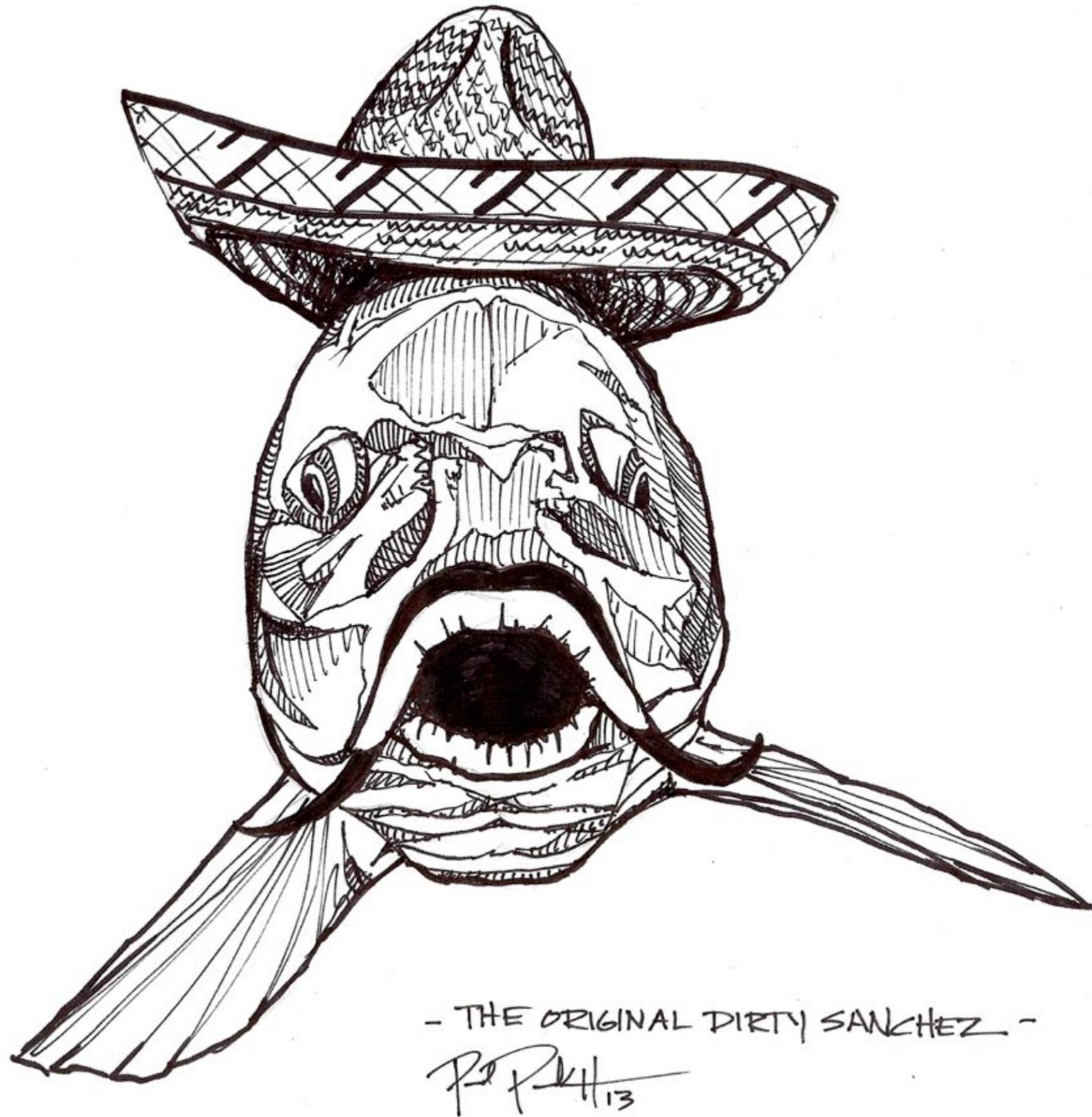


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