



South Coast Fly Anglers



NEWSLETTER December 2022

Chairman: John New (078 203 4549) **Treasurer:** Stephen Brand (082 551 9010) **Secretary:** Dick Plaistowe (082 453 8618)
Liaison and Records Clerk: Pieter vd Merwe (083 543 7005) **Scribe:** Arthur Cary (039 681 3274) **Member:** Neil Scott (083 265 6608)

Preparing to cast.

Another bumper newsletter, thanks to a brace of articles by Sakkie and by Sean and one each from Dick and Steve. Thus, comes to an end, what has essentially been a good year for SCFA. Thanks again for all the contributions from members during the past twelve months. You are all stars in the making! Cheers Arthur.

Events Calendar.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Time</u>
11th December	Bass Outing	Voigt's Dam	07h00
4th January 2023	Committee Meeting	Arthur's home	18h00
11th January 2023	Fly tying Workshop	Neil's home	18h15
8th January 2023	Salt water outing	Mbizane Estuary/Southbroom	07h00
4th March. 2023	Prize Giving	Red Rhyno Farm	17h30

Coming Events.

The last official event of the year is a **bass outing to Voigt's Dam in Paddock on Sunday 11 December.** Steve's braai fire, will, I'm sure be as good as it always is, so bring your own meat and refreshments.

A full list of events for the first 3 months of 2023 will be planned at the Committee meeting, to be held at Arthur's home on Wednesday 4th January. If members have any venues that they would like to be considered, drop Arthur a line, or contact a committee member.

Past Events.

Msuna Invitational, Zambezi River, Zimbabwe, 23rd October to 30th October. By Sakkie McKay

Once again, I was invited to be part of former Police member's fishing team, known as the "Floating Kapentas," to take part in the fishing compo, which is held over 3 days. This tournament is different from others in that 18 species of fish in the Zambezi are targeted and points are given for each specie.

Tiger fish and Vundu are measured on a mat, given to each boat and the length is recorded by means of your cell video, plus, and most importantly, is the release of the fish into the water. No release or dead fish and points are deducted. The fishing hours are from 05h00 to 11h00 and then 14h00 to 18h00, which is a long day. On the final day the prize giving is held and out of 18 four-man teams, we came runners-up having lost out by 4 points.

The river is very low and full of crocs and at our lodge, a monster took a goat, followed by a cow and further up at Milibizi, a poacher was taken, but he was rescued and has lost one arm and both legs. No more poaching for this guy !!!! Shame

The weather was extremely hot with the temp hovering between 38 and 42 C. However, a most enjoyable trip.

Trout trip to Mountain Lake, 8-11th November 2022. By Dick Plaistowe.

Neil Scott, John Neaves and Dick Plaistowe had a misty drive up the mountain from Matat. and arrived at an equally misty Cottage at Mountain Lake, around midday on Tuesday 8th with John and Dick having no idea of the lake size and layout, as it was their first visit; a very long awaited one for Dick.

Wednesday morning was clear and the beauty of the setting was revealed and I was reminded that however we might whinge, albeit justified, about what is not right in SA, we are blessed to have such beauty on our doorstep and need to be reminded of it when we visit the likes of Mountain Lake, Wattled Crane and Silver Streams. These places are world class.



Cont'd on Page 2.

What a fabulous venue for fishing it turned out to be, as well as scenic A venue to which we intend returning on a regular basis, notwithstanding the basic and Spartan accommodation. Why the Municipality can't maintain the place is beyond me, but I guess, it's what we've come to expect of the incompetence of any Municipal or Governmental service in SA these days. Whinging again Dick, remember that the fishing was fantastic.

On the positive side though, there was gas in the cylinders, the hob and possibly the oven, (which we didn't try) worked, the wiring for the 12-volt lights worked, the Jetmaster fireplace was a godsend, the toilet flushed, when filled up with water, lugged up from the lake, and the shower cubicle worked, when using a battery-operated portable shower and water heated on the gas hob. Neil and John braved the mattresses to sleep on, ignoring goodness knows what had they been exposed and subjected to. The mind boggles. Whilst Dick set up a comfortable and sanitised stretcher and foam mattress. Suffice it to say that Dick slept like the dead, unlike Neil and John, who should have had at least as much of the good stuff as Dick had imbibed, to ensure an anaesthetised slumber on their inferior and potentially seriously bed-bug infested and possibly worse, platforms.

Now to the fishing report, which is ultimately the point of this article. The jury is out as to who caught the most fish, but they were plentiful for all, but then take this comment from a guy who normally catches fewer fish than anyone else, and I wasn't going to count.

Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday was fairly slow fishing, although the fish were feisty, with a couple in excess of 50 cm. Thursday was misty in the early morning and overcast for the rest of the day, with fish almost jumping onto green, brown and black Papa Roaches, black Woolly Bugger variants, with orange and chartreuse bead heads, and various damsel nymphs. Neil was more adventurous and also caught on small beaded nymphs. The 35-45 cm fish fought well above their weight, with some long runs to the backing and spectacular aerial displays. The larger fish were more subdued but fought strongly and were not quickly landed. All the fish were in superb condition, and the one fish that was despatched was quite a superb colour and taste after 10 minutes in Dick's Smoker, with some wine barrel wood chips (with a chilled white wine, bread and butter, horseradish sauce and a crunchy salad- Umm, not this lucky unfortunately, but maybe next time). Whilst several fish exceeding 50 cm were landed the largest was a 58 cm Brown caught by Dick, with a close second of 56 cm caught by Neil.

I stand to correction but I would've thought that the altitude and size of the lake would ensure that the water temperature remained low enough to make it possible to fish Mountain Lake throughout the year. I can't wait to return - any takers ????

Trout trip to Silver Streams. Friday 11th November to Monday 14th November. By Sean Tharratt.

Friday.

On Friday, we were all up early and ready to go to Silver Streams. Sean and John travelled with Steve, arriving just after 10am and decided to set up camp first, in case a Berg storm showed up in the afternoon.

Just after setting up camp Neil and Dick arrived from Matat. after fishing at Mountain Lake for a few days, while Kevin arrived later that afternoon.

The river was a bit high, as there it had rained during the week, but it was not unfishable and the water was still on the clean side. We headed out to fish, so that we could explore and see what the area looked like. Sean managed to get 10 fish and no luck for the others.

Saturday.

Saturday we were up early and had breakfast and headed out to fish. The river level had dropped nicely and clarity had improved a lot; we could see the rocks in the water. We started fishing a pool below the bridge and Sean quickly was into a few fish; he was fishing a Czech nymphing rig, with weighted flies, which got down fast to where the fish were; this proved to be the most successful method. Everyone fished various methods during the day to see where they could get a bite. Sean and Dick went into the mountains above Silver Streams and explored some fantastic water. After lunch we were kept off the water by a passing storm for about an hour and went and fished again then headed back to camp for a great supper. Neil kept everyone well fed.

Sunday.

It rained for a few hours during the night and into the early morning hours, but cleared up at about 7am. We had a quick breakfast and around 8am, as we were heading out to fish, another drizzle came over but luckily cleared up in a few minutes and gave us a few hours to fish.



The river was still clean and the level had dropped even further, improving conditions considerably and everyone headed out again to try catch a few fish.

Dick went above Silver Streams onto the mountain path and followed a small stream to the right.; the Bushmans River, to explore there. Sean and Neil tried to follow, but after a few minutes of trying to find the path, decided to head back down and over the field to fish the bigger Ngwangwane River, which has plenty of different types of water to fish. Unfortunately, we had to go for lunch, as it's hard to leave a nice fishing spot, when you are having fun. We went back to have a quick lunch, so we could go back up river and fish. There were dark clouds gathering around and we got just over an hours fishing time, during which it rained a bit then stopped, but then another storm came over with big rain drops and Neil said he even had hail where he was, so we headed back to camp. We had a few beers and a nice braai and headed off to bed.

Monday.

It started as a coolish overcast morning, with a cool breeze around. Everyone was up just after 5am and only Sean headed out for a few throws and landed a quick 10 fish and went back to camp and it was pack up and head home time.

Various flies were used over the weekend. Fishing a dry fly and hoping for that surface take, is probably one of the more exciting methods, but the fish don't always get hooked, so you do get a few misses. You might not get too many fish, but one is better than none!

Total fish landed for the weekend: 129. We hooked a great many more fish, many of which came off in the water. We did not bother using landing nets with many of the tiddlers, which resulted in a number of these being lost before the leader could be brought under control.

All in all it was a great trip. Great company and a great venue. I am sure we will go back sometime. Hopefully the water levels will be slightly lower, making it easier for everyone fishing different methods to catch a fish. As always SCFA outings are well organized and thank you to everyone who went on the trip and did their part, either making food or cleaning up etc.

Trout trip to Matatiele. 14th to 17th November. By Sakkie Mckay.

Having returned from the Zambezi, I was discussing the trip with Stan, when he mentioned that the road to Matat had been worked on and it was open again to vehicles. I could see that Stan had cabin fever, so we decided to head for the mountains. Stan wanted to try out a new tent and I a new minus 2 degree sleeping bag.

The road was clear to traffic and we reported in to mama Temba, who said that as there was no water, we did not have to pay camping fees. Heavy rains had once again messed up the latter part of the road and if more rains had come, it would have been virtually impossible to negotiate. The dam was full, more water than we had seen for a long time.

Having set up camp and boats we fished for the next three and a half days. Weather was iffy, as we have come to know it, but the fishing was excellent. We caught and released 45 fish in total. Apart from a few stockies, most fish were in the one to one and a half kg range and a 2.3 Kg was caught by Stan and I caught one of 2.5kg. On the final morning at five past five just near the jetty and near the weed bed I caught my bucket list, 4kg Brownie. Stan could hear my whoops of delight on the other side of the dam.

Thus ended another wonderful trip to end off the year.

A quick trip to Underberg. Saturday 19th November. By Sean Tharratt.

Having been hired as a guide for the day, I left early on Saturday morning. A holiday maker, staying at Lake Naverone, needed some help fishing the rivers.

I booked the Lower Tretower beat, which is on the Drakensberg Gardens road, opposite the old hatchery restaurant, as the upper beat was already booked. The Umzimkulu river runs through there and it was in excellent condition. The water was clean and not too high, with lots of different types of water to fish.

We fished for about 4 hours, then the guests were tired and the weather started turning overcast and coolish. In between advising them where to fish, I dropped a fly into the water here and there and caught 9 healthy rainbows, 24 cm to 27 cm in size and lost a few others. I would have loved to stay there for Sunday as well, but had other commitments to come back for. I fished the upper Tretower sections at B Nationals, which also proved to be a good stretch of water.



Monthly Meeting. Thursday 24th November. Umtentweni Tennis Club.

Present: 14 members. It was great to again see Ken, David and Kevin.

Apologies: Mike Kirkham, Stan, Sakkie, Pieter.

Flies of the Month: Judged by Steve.

Saltwater: Sand Crab: Neil, Neil, Sean, John, Toi, Arthur, Mitch, Mike S., Matt. Matt's very neat Crab would have been placed much higher, if the barb on the hook had been squashed. School fees, Matt

Freshwater: Peacock Zulu: Neil, Neil, Mike Sk., Arthur, Sean, Mike S., John, Toi.

Coming Events:

A short list of Coming Events, extending into 2023, is given in the Events Calendar. (See above.)

General:

Pieter has already prepared the raffle lists for this year and these are now available from Steve. If you have not received one yet, contact Steve.

Sean gave a brief account of the club outing to Silver Streams and of his recent trip to Underberg. (See reports above.)

Christmas bass outing to Steve's Dam. Sunday 27th November. By Stephen Brand.

Steve and Kevin arrived first, followed by Arthur and John, Warren and Connor, Dick, Neil, Mike S and Toi Mike K, Sakkie, Stan, Sean and Stacey. Apologies were received from Ken, Marion and David, who could not make the outing.

Weather was overcast with intermittent drizzle most of the morning, until it rained heavily just as we came off the water for lunch at 10h30.

Not all of those who attended, fished and not all anglers launched kick boats, but more than 20 bass were caught, many of them in the 25 cm to 30 cm range. The bank anglers probably accounted for more fish than did the kick-boaters.

Steve and Kevin had popped up the gazebos and started the fire well in time. (*Good organization, as always Ed.*)

Thanks to June for the meringues; sadly, Sakkie forgot the whisky.

I'd like to thank all those who came; made it worthwhile preparing the dam and cutting the grass on all the banks. Regards and a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to all.

Fry, Fingerling and Stockie Stories.



Ex member, Gerald Mc Cay, who now lives in Mbango Valley Retirement Village, has a truck load of fly fishing equipment that he wants to get rid of. Included are rods, reels and a complete kick boat. Contact him on 083 324 6128 or on gerald.sue.mccay@gmail.com



It is once again time for SCFA members to don their thinking caps and decide which flies should be added to the Competition Flies for 2023. A list of flies, tied in the last few years, has been sent to members.

We need flies that **1.** Will catch fish in our conditions and **2.** Require materials that are readily available. Please give this some serious thought, and submit your list. In the past, this task has fallen on the committee and their choice may not have been to the satisfaction of general members.

Last Cast.

There are numerous benefits to being Scribe of the SCFA newsletter, especially as the end of the year approaches. Besides the generous pay package, the Christmas bonus and the pleasure that I receive from putting the newsletter together, it gives me the huge privilege of wishing all members and readers a very Happy and Holy Christmas and a fabulous New Year. If you are going away, safe travels; return rested and ready to tackle 2023 and all that it may cast your way. If you are being wise and will spend the Festive season at home, enjoy your visitors and family stay safe.

I look forward to seeing you at many of the functions that will be organised in 2023.

A tip for your New Year's Resolution: **I will attend more SCFA meetings and outings than I did last year.**

Cheers Arthur.

