



South Coast Fly Anglers



NEWSLETTER April 2026

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 (076 312 0417) **Member:** Neil Scott (083 265 6608)

This newsletter opens with a short tribute to the late Ken Schultz, who's passing earlier in the month, came as a huge shock to everyone. He had, in fact, fished with us up at Rocky Bay a few days before he suffered a heart attack, from which he did not recover. MHDSRIP.

Tribute to Ken Schwartz. 21 October 1948 – 5 March 2026.

South Coast Fly Anglers are certainly the poorer, with the passing of Ken. He joined the club in 2010, with an established background in fly fishing. This had been honed in the Dullstroom area, over many years and he often showed the rest of us how it should be done, especially in the salt water.

Even though he was well beyond retiring age, he was still working for Stefanutti Stocks and SNA and at the time of his passing, was working on piling designs for roads and bridges in the Durban area: he was a highly respected engineer, and his expertise was widely recognised and valued.

Fly fishing was of course, also high up on his "To do" list, but without doubt, for Ken, his family came first. There were very few events where we were not honoured with the presence of the whole Schwartz family.

Ken was a backroom-boy as far as SCFA was concerned. He never volunteered for a position on the committee, but very often offered a word or two of advice at a monthly meeting, regarding outings, or flies that should be tried.

He also rarely featured in the prize-giving records, for the simple reason that he did not record his catches in the Catch Record Book. He was one of the few anglers who fished purely for the pleasure of being out there. The fact that he occasionally came home with a blank sheet, did not faze him at all. He had sallied out with the intention of fishing and that is what he had accomplished, so "Job done" as far as he was concerned. Fish caught were a bonus.

I don't think that Ken had an enemy in the world and even though he was severely handicapped by a gammy foot and knee over the last few years, he was never without a huge smile and a hearty laugh, even when being bowled over by a rogue wave, which happened quite often.

Ken, South Coast Fly Anglers were honoured to have had you as a member and your cheerful nature and ready wit will certainly be missed in the coming years.

Preparing to cast.

We no sooner say "Cheerio" to the passing of the 25/26 SCFA year, when we have to greet the 26/27 version. That is life and should not be viewed as a negative event at all. New Year's resolutions are by now, broken and long forgotten, so here is a golden opportunity of giving them a refresher course. One now has the liberty of eradicating what did not work on the fishing-front last year and here is an excellent chance to improve on what did actually work, a win-win for all concerned. Cheers. Hope to see you on the water. . Arthur

Events Calendar.

Date	Event	Venue	Time
10th April	Committee Dinner	C Bali. St mike's	18h00
12th April	Saltwater outing	TO Strand	Early
15th April	Fly-tying workshop	Neil's home	18h15
26th April	Bass outing	Voigt's dam	Early
April 30th	Monthly meeting	Umtentweni Tennis Club	18h00 for 18h30
May 6th	Fly-tying workshop	Neil's home	18h15
May 10th	Saltwater outing	Mzamba	Early
May 13 th	Committee meeting	John's home	18h00
May 24 th	Scaley outing	Oribi Gorge	08h00
May 28 th	Monthly meeting	Umtentweni Tennis Club	18h00 for 18h30



Coming Events.

The Committee Dinner is at C Bali, in St Mike's this year. Committee members, be there at 18h00 on Friday 10th April.

On Sunday, 12th April we have a saltwater outing to TO Strand. Be there early, in order to take advantage of the tide. Sorry, as there are no braai facilities, you will have to make do with BYO sarmies and liquid refreshments in the car park, after fishing.

The first fly-tying workshop of the SCFA year is at Neil's home on Wednesday 15th April at 18h15. We will be tying the Blue Gill Fly and the Organza Shrimp. SCFA members should by now have received recipes.

Bass are on the menu for the outing to Voigt's Dam on Sunday 26th April. An early start will get the appetite up for the normal BYO braai afterwards. If Marion and David are there, we will hold a short ceremony to remember Ken, as Voigt's Dam was one of his favourite bass dams.

Monthly meeting at the Umtentweni Tennis Club on Thursday 30th April. Don't forget your Blue Gill and Organza Shrimp flies for the start of the 2026/27 FotM compo.

Shaun Dickson, from Xplorer should be there to show us a Sterkies Hopper or two. No braai fire, but SCFA will supply boerie rolls. We will need an RSVP, as to who will be attending, so watch out for Steve's SMS a day or so before the meeting, to ensure that you get your roll.

Past Events.

Private outing to Castleburn Resort. Friday 6th March to Monday 9th March. By John New.

Steve, Kevin, Mike and John went up on to Castleburn on Friday and fished the dams on the estate.

Steve caught 2, Mike caught 2 and John got 1. On Saturday morning, we fished the river and all caught fish. When we stopped for brunch, Kevin decided he wanted a lighter rod, so drove through to Dwane in Underberg and bought a 2wt rod, reel and line and all the local fishing info, then couldn't stop trying his luck when he got back. Green flies worked, while Steve used a Wolf Spider.

Sunday was a lot cooler, but we only managed to catch in the smaller dams.

Mike landed 9 fish, John caught 8, Steve caught 4 and Kevin got 1 for a total of 22 fish.

Club outing to Wattled Crane. Friday 13th March to Monday 16th March. By Mitch Rorich.

Seven members, Arthur, John, Steve, Sakkie, Frank, Mitch and Rob, travelled to the venue, arriving mid-morning on Friday.

The usual busy activities, unloading, settling-in, kick boat and tackle assembly commenced shortly thereafter, with John and Arthur first on the water.

The weather was generally good, with a few gusty hours each day, not deterring the enthusiastic anglers among us.

Warmish water (20 deg. Ed) and a noticeable weed-growth made angling some-what harder than previously experienced, however the condition and quality of the fish caught, was superb. All but one safely released.

Twenty-nine rainbows in total were caught, ranging from 1 kg to 2,5 kg generally, with the odd fish marginally heavier. Successful flies used were: Muishond, black and olive Woolly Buggers, an orange tailed Woolly Worm and Mrs Simpson in the larger sizes. (ca. # 8) proved the most productive, with intermediate and sinking lines, the preferred choice.

Noticeably, fish were taken in a particular area of the lake on one day and in another area on the next. Finding the active area, meant covering the water.

Many thanks to the "chefs," who provided excellent meals, accompanied by ample hydraulics, the added bonus.

All members thankfully returned safely home. An excellent outing all round. Mitch.

Rhodes Flyfishing Festival 2026. 17th to 21st March. By Dick Plaistowe.

Neil Scott and Dick Plaistowe attended yet another Rhodes Flyfishing Festival which ran from Tuesday 17th to Saturday 21st March. The Festival was at one stage threatened with being cancelled, as a result of the Foot and Mouth disease (FMD) that is devastating many rural areas across South Africa. Strict protocols were imposed on attendees with disinfection required of literally every piece of flyfishing kit and clothing, from head to toe, and rods, reels, fly lines and flies, and particularly vehicles.



Disinfection of the vehicle was required at Barkly East, before travelling the 65 kms to Rhodes, while the alternative routes to Rhodes were not allowed. Daily disinfection of boots and vehicles was also necessary, which was done at Walkerbouts Hotel in Rhodes, which is the operational centre for the Festival.

We were told that the Midlands area has been severely impacted by FMD, with mass culling of affected herds of cattle in particular and understandably, the cattle and dairy farmers in the Himeville, Underberg, Kokstad and Matat. areas are also under threat of having their livelihoods destroyed. One does not want to delve into politics but it was clear when driving to Rhodes that many stock owners allowed their cattle, goats and sheep to roam freely, which does not augur well for controlling this FMD outbreak.

There were several old faces missing and new faces in their place at this year's Festival, possibly as a result of the FMD restrictions and also because we understood that fishing permits would only be available for the four Festival fishing days and not before or after the Festival. It has become common practice in the past to fish before the Festival, which Neil and I have been doing for some years now.

It remains to be seen when fishing permits will be available in Rhodes, but I guess at the earliest only once the local farmers have vaccinated their herds and who knows how long that will be. From a totally selfish standpoint, one can only hope that the same approach is not taken in the Southern Berg areas that the SCFA members fish such as Wattled Crane, Mountain Lake, Silver Streams and the Himeville/Underberg rivers and still waters. Although one can hardly blame the farming community from demanding such controls, the area is freely accessible and has a tourism industry and widely spread rural communities that will be impacted.

So, down to the business of the Festival. The waters certainly looked very prospective on all the streams in the area, being the Bell, which flows through Rhodes and the Bok, with its tributary, the Riflespruit, which flows into the Sterkspruit and in turn joining the Bell at Moshesh's Ford, where it becomes the Kraai river. The water levels and the clarity was perfect and we were hopeful that the fishing would be great.

First day we were allocated a beat on the Sterkspruit that we'd not fished before, which was very pretty, but turned out to be very disappointing, with little fast flowing water and many long slow runs, with minimal fish activity. Having said that Neil did well with 10 fish, Dick with 2 (one of which was too small for a sardine tin) and our vastly experienced guide Jan Korrubell, with either 1 or 2. The following three days saw us on the Bok Spruit at Birnam, then Lovedale on the Bell upstream from Rhodes and finally Birnam. Total fish landed and released Neil 19 and Dick 12, which was nowhere near our normal performance. The fishing proved to be very difficult in gin clear water, particularly in the Bell and there was some speculation that the harsh winter snowfall had decimated the fish. Whilst many of the fish were under 6 inches, the average was between 6-10 inches with the largest 11-13 inches. All fish were caught on dry flies (Klinkhammer, Hi Vis Midge, hopper, Stimulator), with long leaders and every care not to spook the fish.

In conclusion the Rhodes Festival has a generous sponsor, being Dirt Road Traders, based in Pietermaritzburg and well worth a visit if you're up that way, is well organized, well catered, is held in spectacularly beautiful countryside, with a variety of streams to fish, and wonderful camaraderie, all of which keeps us going back.

Annual General Meeting at the Umtentweni Tennis Club. Thursday 26th March.

Chairman, John, called for a moments silence to honour the passing of Ken Schultz.

Notice of the meeting : This was presented and certified to be correct.

Present: 18 members. (It was good to see Domenick and Andre, who have been hard at the school books of late.)

Apologies: David Schwartz, Elisa, Reagan.

Minutes of the previous meeting. Dick Plaistowe read the minutes of the previous meeting. These were proposed by John and seconded by Rob.

Chairmans report: John presented his annual report in which he thanked committee members for fulfilling their roles in the various portfolios. Arthur as scribe of the newsletter, Dick as Secretary and in particular, the sterling work that Steve does as Treasurer, Piet for his record keeping and Neil for the superb organisation of our longer outings (Sterkfontein and Richtersveldt) as well as the mentoring we receive at the fly-tying workshops. He also thanked members for their support of local outings. Thanks were extended to the Umtentweni Tennis Club, for allowing us to use the hall for our monthly meetings. He then went through the list of prize winners, (the full list is given in the report on the Prize Giving evening. (see below.)



Financial Report: Steve gave his usual concise report on the club finances, which are slightly down on last year. This is understandable, as sponsorship of an outing and purchase of fly-tying materials, took a hefty whack out of funds.

Master at Arms. This year, the Master at Arms, took advantage of the fact that all club members are getting to the age where forgetfulness is a common problem. All those present received a tongue lashing from the master, including the Master himself. Most of the fines were issued for forgetting some item of fishing equipment. Neil's fine was for forgetting to apply the handbrake to his vehicle, the resulting crash, when his vehicle smashed into that of Steve, caused huge damage to both double cabs.

Guilty members are thanked for their generosity and a total of nearly R 1400.00 was collected, with a bit more to come from those who missed the meeting.

General:

Steve gave a short account of their trip to Castleburn and John, Mitch and Steve gave short accounts of the trip to Wattled Crane. (See reports above.)

Dick and Neil fished the Rhodes Festival and gave a short report on this event. (See Dick's report above.)

Mike S. and Toi, recently visited the Giant's Castle area and were impressed by the scenery, the condition of the Reserve, the Bushman's River and the area in general. This area is worth a visit, despite the absolutely horrific condition of the access road.

Pieter C. reported that Domenick recently won the junior prize in a Ski Boat competition in Durban. Well done, Dom, even though you did not use the wand.

Sean said that Kidd's Beach had recently produced wave garrick on a regular basis. Chartreuse Charlies seemed to work best.

Sakkie suggested that we visit the Dordrecht area at some stage, as he had caught big fish there, some time back. A discussion centred around the variable weather experienced in that area. Dick was only able to fish for a few hours over a four-day trip due to high wind, when he visited there.

Steve fished the Paddock Compo over the past week-end, caught a couple of small bass, but had a most enjoyable time. Mitch explained that the compo was originally started as a method to reduce the number of small fish in the local dams, thereby improving the general condition of all fish.

The evening closed with the usual Gesellige" braai, for which we again thank the reliable and well named Mr Stephen "Conflagration" Brand.

Prize Giving. Venue: The home of Stephen and Olga Brand in Trafalgar. Saturday 28th March.

A total of 23 members and family attended this most enjoyable BYO braai; salads were provided by committee members and Olga and Belinda provided the dessert as usual, for which they get a huge vote of thanks. As Marion does not drive in the dark, apologies from her and David were noted. Apologies were also received from Mike S. and Toi, Mitch and Liam.

2025 proved to be the Year of the Youth, because Reagan deservedly scooped a bucket full of awards, as seen in the following list, while Neil earned 4 awards. Notably among these was the Foul Hook Award; this for almost wrecking both his and Steve's double cabs, when he forgot what a hand brake is for. John received the Salty Bugger Award, newly donated by Mitch, for the most saltwater species caught. The Brand family again deservedly received the Chris van Wyk, Chairman's award, for all that they do for the club.

The raffle winners are: 1st Prize. Marion Schwartz. 2nd Prize Rob Nicholas 3rd Prize Mike S. and Toi 4th prize Matt Dickens.



Prize Winners.

Most Prestigious Fish: Reagan Volschenk. 2,1 kg bass.
Most Prestigious Local fish: Reagan Volschenk. 2,1 kg bass
Most Improved Angler: Reagan Volschenk.
2nd Most Prestigious fish: John New. 2,0 kg bass
Most prolific Angler: Neil Scott. 138 fish caught.
Saltwater Fly tyer of the year: Neil Scott.
Freshwater Fly tyer of the Year: John New.
Foul Hook Award: Neil Scott.
Salty Bugger Award: John New. (Most saltwater species caught.) 2 species.
Merit Award for the most species caught: Neil Scott. 5 species

Chris van Wayk Chairmann's award: Brand family.

(It should be noted that many anglers did not record their catches, notably Liam vd Merwe (Fishing in the Seychelles) as well as the late Ken Schultz and others and therefor do not qualify for an award.)

Thanks to the bumming prowess of Steve and Belinda, all those who attended received at least one lucky dip prize from the following generous sponsors:

Xplorer Fly Fishing, Busy Bee Apiary, Luckys Port Shepstone, Luckys Manaba, Luckys Manaba Fishing, Gracemed Pharmacy, Coast and Country Agri, Doug's Hardware, Industrial Supply Centre, M&F Tractor Parts, Coastal Farmers, Earthwood Craft, Belinda's Pickles, Red Ryno Farm.

Fry, Fingerling and Stocky stories.



A study of sharks in the Bahamas, has shown that sharks in these "pristine waters" have tested positive for cocaine, caffeine and other contaminants.

Read the full report in <https://share.google/0pk3W7NcUbyT1KvLN>



Humans continue to wreck the environment. Read how the migration of fish is being hampered by the erection of dams and barriers in rivers throughout the world. <https://share.google/DwaYRdv8Es1SWlwJQ>



All but a half-dozen or so of members have paid their subs. If you are among the defaulters, please contact Steve on (082 551 9010) to ensure that you do not get wiped from the membership list.



A junior friend of Steve's is looking for a kick boat. Please contact Steve on cell number (082 551 9010) if you can help.

Last Cast.

It is said that too much of a good thing is a bad thing, so I won't say another word, except to wish all readers a Blessed Easter; travel safely if you will be on the road and be safe if you are among the wise and are staying put at home.

Cheers, Arthur.

