

SW FLORIDA FISHING

Natures reality check

BY CAPT. JOE LACLAIR

When spring comes the world is new again and the great outdoors speaks to us in so many ways. This spring has been full of rain and the nesting birds have are missing many of the trees that were used before the hurricane in the fall of 2022. Nature is incredibly resistant and sometimes we catch a glimpse of just how amazing it is. In the spring of 2010 we experienced a deep cold snap that killed millions of fish, including some of our local snook. What I observed that summer and fall after the "freeze of 2010" was nothing short of amazing. The mature female snook that survived, kicked out way more eggs and there were more small snook around in the spring of 2011. Areas where the small snook could be found had 50 times the usual amount of small snook. This spring

the birds are nesting all over the place and in some cases they are nesting right on top of each other. But the fittest will survive. Recently, while I was headed back into the backcountry on the flats boat I stopped next to a small island which is a natural sanctuary and many birds both nest and live on the little island. This little island is like so many other rookeries and provides safety from predators and invasive species that love to eat eggs and young birds. When we stopped I noticed a roseate spoonbill that was acting strange. For one second I thought it was doing some sort of strange mating dance, but once I looked closer I could see something was wrong. I quickly grabbed the anchor and slipped on my rubber booties. My fishing pliers are equipped with titanium cutters which can cut braided fishing line. I slipped

Capt. Joe LeClair can be reached at (774) 263-2675 or at flyfishsalt.com



them into my pocket and jumped into action. The island was full of nesting birds and others so I know I was right on the edge of doing a good deed and causing another problem, so I treaded lightly to say the least. Once I was able to get to the spoonbill, I could see that it was tangled in fishing line. The line was wound around the bird's beak eight to ten times. I removed my sweatshirt as I have done before when handling animals but the spoonbill was totally calm and tied tight to a branch so I only had to cut the line free from its beak and it would be free. I have never touched the beak of a roseate spoonbill, but I can now say it was similar to a piece of balsa wood and different than anything I have ever seen before. After I cut the fishing line the bird flew away and I began the task of picking up the rest of the fishing line, which was



strung across the end of the tiny island. As I found the end of the line I was looking down at a nest and there were five beautiful light blue eggs, each the size of a baseball laying in the middle of a nest. Near the nest was a large great blue heron and as I pulled the end of the fishing line off the island that momma blue just watched me. When I got back on the boat she was back on the nest. We see so little of the world around us if we don't take the time to stop and look and I was lucky to see so much this day.

MIL 1 LLION

Finding the right solution takes the experience to know what to look for. Our time-tested team of attorneys will thoroughly explore your situation, anticipate your legal challenges and provide clear counsel with your distinct goals in mind. Consider it your individualized representation that's

ONE IN A MILLION.

Contact us today for practical solutions to your legal needs.

FERGESON SKIPPER
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

FergesonSkipper.com | 941.957.1900

Named a 2022 "Best Law Firm" by U.S. News – Best Lawyers
Tier 1 Sarasota: Tax, Trusts & Estates Law; Tier 2 Sarasota: Litigation, Trusts & Estates

Wills, Trusts & Estates | Tax Law | Business Litigation | Civil Trial
Real Estate Law | Guardianships | Business Organizations & Corporate Law

**MARINE SURVEYING
AND YACHT CONSULTING**

ADRIAN J. VOLNEY, INC.

Pre-Purchase • Sale • Insurance • Condition and Value
Local, insured, 35 years experience
Visit adrianvolney.com to view full survey
Professional photos provided on every survey

42nd Annual
Rotary Fine Arts Festival






Join Us!

**Saturday
&
Sunday
March 23 & 24**

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
On West Dearborn Street

by Steve Whitlock

Masterpieces, music and stunning artwork will adorn the streets on March 23 & 24. Experience the best of Florida culture with fine art, music & food.

Presented by: The Rotary Club of Englewood and the Englewood Youth Foundation





