Photo – Adam and Chelsea Peppler enjoyed wading the marsh for Amelia Island tailing reds recently during the spectacular flood tides. Just park your fishing boat and wade right in!

Photo – (special) Kent Poteat enjoys poling his shallow water skiff for Amelia Island tailing redfish along with Russ Heller. Having a flood tide of 6.8-feet or higher is critical.

Photo- Local avid outdoorsman Cliff Thrift pictured on left with long time friend Ronnie Cook, recently passed away after a lengthy illness. Cliff also enjoyed the outdoors with longtime friend Allen Mills.

 “Tails in the Grass”

 Back country fishermen have been enjoying extremely high flood tides recently with strong northeast winds and a present new moon. Flood tides began on September 27th with the arrival of a “New Moon” and lasted right through this past weekend. In some areas of the marsh, the flood tides completely covered the spartina marshes where shallow water skiff could pole or use their electric trolling motor to cast to “Tailing Reds”.

 Kent Poteat and Russ Heller are avid red fishermen that recently enjoy casting both flies and lures to Amelia Island flood tide redfish.

 “We use the tide apt “tides4fishing” when determining if the tides will be high enough for tailing redfish,” Kent Poteat said. “This apt also provides sun and moon info, lunar phases, fish activity and weather conditions, all in one. If the flood tide is going to be 6.8-feet or higher, we should be able to target redfish tailing in the flooding marshes. Recently we had a new moon arrive on September 27th which provided excellent flood tides all last week.”

 “During one of our better days last week we saw up to twelve tailing redfish, landed two and lost one.”

 “We typically use both fly and spin fishing gear when fishing for tailing redfish. For conventual tackle I will attach a 1/16th ounce bullet weight onto my line with a small weed less hook. Next, I will thread a 3” chartreuse curly tail soft plastic grub onto the weed less hook.”

 “My favorite fly when fly casting for flood tide redfish is by far the Merkins/Kwans in the black/purple/gold color pattern.”

 Stocking redfish on a flooded spartina marsh is much like trying to surprise your lady with a box of candy, once she sees the candy, she is definitely caught! Redfish are very similar as they tail in the flooded marsh head down feeding on fiddler crabs and other crustaceans.

 A good pair of wading shoes with good hard rubber soles is a must. Wading shoes that dry out fast are also a good option. The new rubber shoes with all of those big holes are perfect for wade fishing. The large holes allow the water and any sand to be flushed and dried in a hurry.

 Lightweight fishing pants will protect you from any jellyfish, or other marine animals that tend to inflict pain to your exposed legs. I would also recommend a fishing vest to store extra lures, pliers and other essentials that are needed while you are away from your boat, or dry land. A live bait bucket is a must for keeping baits lively and with easy access. A small landing net tied to your belt will also aid in landing big redfish.

 Some of the best redfish lures for wade fishing include lures that you can cast long distances in covering a lot of water. Included are spoons and topwater plugs. Once you have located where the redfish are holding on the flat, switch to finesse lures including plastic baits rigged with a led head jig, or weighted hook.

 My personal favorite way when targeting flood tide redfish is casting a crab pattern fly with a twenty-pound tippet, eight-weight fly rod and floating fly line. Once a tailing red is spotted, I will cast my crab pattern fly right into a hole in the marsh grass where the foraging red is likely to migrate to. Watching your fly line is critical when detecting the strike, set the hook and keep the fly rod tip high to keep the fly line from tangling in the grass.

 Amelia Island redfish will tail in the flooded spartina marshes during the Spring, Summer and Fall during a full, or new moon. Or simply when the tides are higher than 6.8-feet.

 The Amelia Island Yacht basin will once again host the “Annual Folds of Honor Redfish Spot Tournament” October 25-26, 2019. Folds of Honor, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, provides educational scholarships for the spouses and children of those killed or disabled while serving our great nation. Children’s scholarships also subsidize the costs of tuition, tutoring, school uniforms, schoolbooks, fees, after school educational programs, and approved educational summer camps. Since its inception in 2007, Folds of Honor has awarded nearly 20,000 educational scholarships to the families of our fallen and wounded soldiers—in ALL 50 states. For more information please e-mailsemperficharters@gmail.com, or call Brian Soucy, (904) 505-3481