

Marina, says the Golden Isles offer a unique venue for fly fishing.

“The extensive network of Spartina islands, oyster laden tidal creeks and mudflats that surround the islands offer some of the most beautiful backcountry fly fishing in the world,” he says.

Fly fishing is the purest form of fishing, beautiful in its simplicity. The fly fisherman’s art is casting line rather than lure because a fly is too light to be cast. That philosophy flows into the coastal environment as well, but the coastal fly fisherman uses a different kind of magic to trick his prey into biting.

“Our flies are more colorful,” Ellen Kennedy says. “Where in freshwater they imitate insects, here they imitate crabs, shrimp and minnows. One of the most successful flies we have is bright chartreuse, the Clousen Minnow.”

Redfish is the coastal fly fisherman’s favorite species.

“Redfish are great because you can fish for them year-round,” Hildreth says. “The best fishing is in the winter. They’re a pretty good size too, between 25 to 31 inches and 7 to 13 pounds. We haven’t been having much success with tarpon because of the water clarity. In the fall, speckled trout are a good catch.”

In this age of fish-finders and depth gauges, who engages in the classic art of fly fishing?

“The guys who have done fin tackle and live bait tackle,” Hildreth says. “They want something more interactive. Fly fishing is more skillful, more like playing golf. The allure is that it is harder to master. It’s not about catching the most fish. You have to see the fish and present the fly in the right position. It’s more of a challenge”



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