

WATERDOG



By Bob Bates

In Jason Rhodes' world "waterdog" is the generic name for a Tiger Salamander. There are many salamanders around the world. The eggs hatch in water, progress to a larval stage called "waterdog" by some and most climb out of the water to live on land. Some get large enough to scare a person. What ever name you use, big bass love to eat them if they have a chance, and this "waterdog" has and will fool big bass.

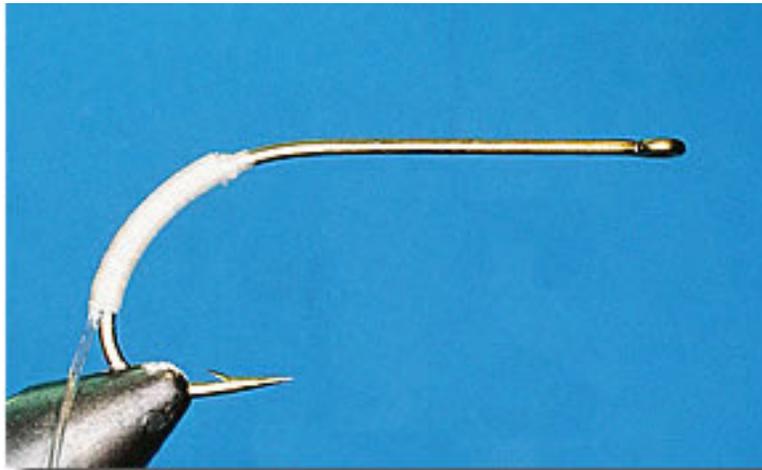
Jason (Pocatello, Idaho) tied several 4-1/2-inch long bass flies like this at the 38th International Fly Fishing Conclave and Show in Idaho Falls, Idaho, August, 2003. Most of them had attractive, spun-deer-hair heads, but this one looked easier to tie.

Fishing this size of weighted fly can be a little tricky for a person accustomed to casting a size 18 blue wing olive. One thing it has a lot of air resistance, and another it is heavy. Be sure of your casting technique. Use a larger rod, apply plenty of power to overcome the resistance, and be sure you feel the pull of the back cast before starting the forward cast. Improper casting might case the fly to land on the back of your head. If you are not comfortable casting this big "bug" ask an FFF Certified Casting Instructor for a quick brush up.

Jason recommends casting a Type III full sinking line and letting the fly sink to the bottom. Then start a slow hand twist retrieve to walk it across the bottom. It catches both small mouth and large mouth bass. In response to my question "Where do you fish it?" he responded "Lakes in Oklahoma." I had hoped for a hot tip on a lake around Idaho Falls.

Materials list:**Hook:** Tiemco TMC 8089 size 2**Thread:** Unithread, 3/0 any color**Weed guard:** Monofilament, 20-pound**Weight:** Lead or lead free wire 0.030**Body:** Estaz, cactus**Rib:** Copper wire**Legs:** Round rubber, large olive**Tail:** Magnum rabbit strip, about 5/16-inch wide by 4 inches long, olive**Head:** Wool, dark brown and medium olive**Eyes:** 3 to 4 mm**Tying steps:**

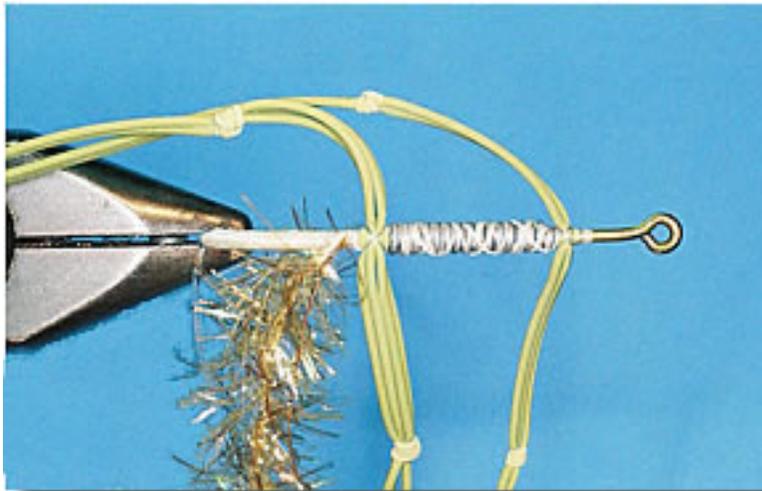
1. Smash down the barb before you start tying if a barbless fly is desired.



2. Attach thread at bend of hook, and let thread hang between the point and barb. Tie in 20-pound mono around the bend of hook for weed guard. Coat thread with head cement.



3. Wind lead wire on rear 2/3rds of hook, and wrap thread over the wire to secure it. Secure Estaz and copper wire at bend of hook.



4. Take three pieces of round rubber a bit over 2 inches long. Match the ends, and tie overhand knots in all three about a half inch from each end. Secure one set of legs on top of hook at bend using a figure eight thread wrap. Move thread forward to front of lead coil, and tie in a second set of legs. These are just under 2 inches long with overhand knots tied as above. Move thread forward a wind or two.



5. Wrap Estaz forward to one wrap in front of front legs, secure and trim excess. After the Estaz is wrapped bring the weed guard forward, and tie it securely in front of the Estaz.



6. Trim a little point on back end of rabbit strip, and secure the other end in front of Estaz.



7. Spiral copper wire forward over the rabbit strip. Pull the hair apart to expose the hide where the wire will go. The first wrap is behind the rear legs and then five wraps forward, secure and trim excess. (Use back part of scissors to trim wire.)



8. Begin stacking the wool. Put a bunch of brown on top of the hook, and then a bunch of olive on the bottom of the hook. Repeat with two more bunches of each color. Compact the bunches. Hold the hook at the front of the Estaz with one hand and push backward on the front bunches with thumb and first finger of the other hand. Continue adding bunches of wool and compacting until there is no room left. Whip finish and cut thread.



9. Trim head with scissors to a rounded shape. Looking from the top the head is almost square with a blunt nose. Some of the brown wool extends rearward over the rabbit strip like a collar. The olive wool is trimmed even with the front legs.



10. Glue on eyes and coat them with epoxy.



11. Bottom of Waterdog.

Closing comments: The final step in any fly tying process is go fishing. For us in the Northern hemisphere, July and August are warm months so we should go looking for warm water fish. Almost wherever you live there should be a bass lake within reach where you can test this pattern. Some of the bass in warmer waters can grow to huge sizes so be ready for a fight.

Please Credit FFF Website or FFF Clubwire with any use of the pattern.
You can direct any questions or comments to FOM at flyofthefmonth@fedflyfishers.org