

SLUMP BUSTER



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Opening Comments

John Barr designed this pattern. It is very popular with many anglers because of its fantastic movement. As with any good pattern, there are many variations. Kit Seaton from Billings, MT was tying his version of it at the 2012 East Idaho Fly Tying Expo in Idaho Falls, ID.

If you are having trouble hooking into a fish try changing your fly to a Slump Buster, cast, retrieve and hang on. It can have an erratic movement through the water that drives fish crazy. In shallow water use a floating line and strip it with short jerks. When you strip this fly the head comes up and it dives down between strips. In deeper water use a full sinking line, let the line sink for a bit and again strip it erratically. This movement drives the fish crazy, and they have to hit it hard. It is a matuka-style streamer. Vary the speed of the retrieve until the fish tell you what they want. Sometimes long, slow strips are the answer while other times fast and furious produces. As always be sure to go fishing on overcast days. You'll like the fun!

Materials list

Hook: 4X long, size 6

Weight: Cone head brass, large and lead wire, 0.030-inch

Thread: Flat wax nylon, heavy, black

Rib: Copper wire, size BR (brassy)

Body: Sculpin wool, white camo

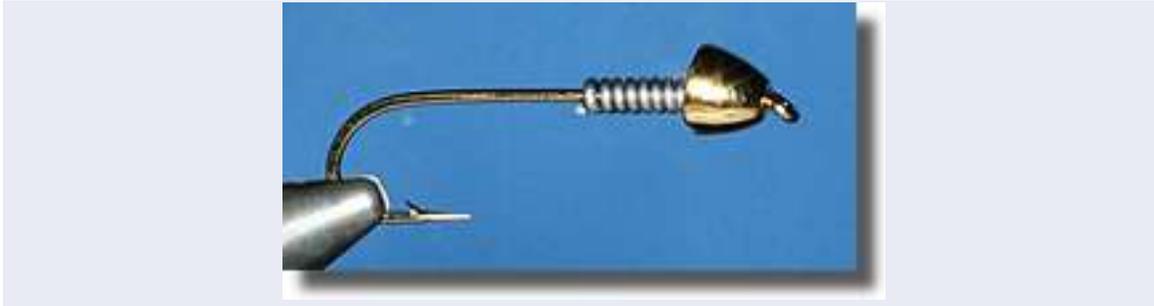
Tail, fin and collar: Pine squirrel strips; natural, olive, brown and black

Tying steps



Step 1

The original pattern calls for a tungsten cone, but a brass cone is less expensive. Put cone on hook and place hook in vise.



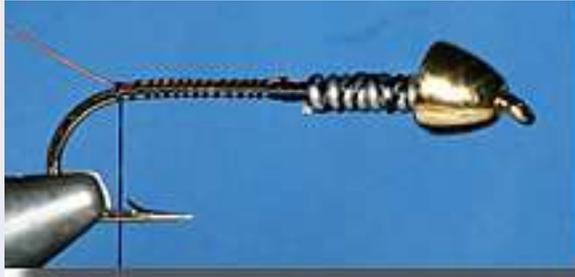
Step 2

Put on 10 wraps of lead wire to make up for weight lost for using a brass cone in place of tungsten. Also, can use lead-free wire. The wire also builds up the body a little. Lead wraps take up about half the hook shank. Shove as much of the coil as possible into the cone.



Step 3

Put thread on hook behind the lead coil. Just enough to secure it.



Step 4

Tie in the copper rib behind the lead coil, and wind over the wire to the bend. Keep the wire on top of the shank.



Step 5

The body braid used by John Barr makes a thin body. So Kit uses sculpin wool, but not in the usual way. He pulls it off in a long piece and makes a point at one end so he can tie it on the hook behind the lead coil. It helps the transition between the lead coil and the shank. Wrap over the wool back to the bend.



Step 6

Grab all the dubbing and the thread. Twist them together a half turn, as they are wrapped forward they make a cord. The thread is completely hidden in the dubbin. Leave a gap behind the cone just about the size of the pine squirrel strip you will be using.



Step 7

Strip off some of the fur so you get a firm hold on the strip when you tie it behind the cone. Tie it in so the fur flows toward the back of the hook.



Step 8

Divide the fur just above the back wire tie down point. Then make a turn of copper wire through the gap. This lets you get on top of the pine squirrel strip and body. Now, start spiraling the wire forward. Divide the fur where you want the wire pass and wrap it through. You may moisten the fur a little to make it easier to control dividing the fur. Make about five evenly spaced turns of wire to the cone. The even spacing probably doesn't catch more fish, but it looks nicer. Secure wire and trim excess with the back part of the scissors. To trim the tail, bring the strip forward, pass your scissors through the fur about at the back of the cone and cut the strip square. If you cut the leather carefully there will be no Pine squirrel guard hairs flying around. Pine squirrel gives a nice taper, even with the square cut.



Step 9

Kit ties the collar on separately which is another variation from John Barr. At home he puts Zap-a-Gap into the cone. Trim off some fur, and tie it on top of the hook. Lay the strip on at an angle in the direction that you are going to wrap it. He doesn't count the first go around as a wrap because of the fur trim. When he gets to the bottom again he counts it as the first wrap. On the second wrap he pulls the strip tightly so it slides off the first wrap and into the cone. If it doesn't slide into the cone he will cram it in. He puts on two wraps unless he encounters poor quality hair. Then he will put on three wraps. Whip finish behind the cone. Sometimes he trims the collar on the bottom to give it a sculpin appearance.

Closing Comments

Kit recommends buying the pine squirrel Matuka strips on the entire pelt. They are usually more uniform than packaged strips. This pattern could be tied with rabbit like a Zonker, but the pine squirrel has fantastic action. He likes to fish smaller rivers by walking the bank. The pattern could be used from a boat also. He has tied this pattern in any pine squirrel color he could find. He is thinking about bleaching the Pine squirrel so he will have lighter fur to use. In the meantime he uses the lightest he can find on the pelt.

Please Credit FFF Website or FFF Clubwire with any use of the pattern.

You can direct any questions or comments to FOM at flyofthemoth@fedflyfishers.org.