

FOAMPY



Often a high floating fly is needed in heavy water. If you use a great fly like the Humpy, it works just fine until those mean fish shred the deer hair. Also the Humpy is a bit difficult to tie. The Foampy is Ed Morphis' approach to solving both problems. He showed us how to tie it at the Boise Valley Fly Fishermen Fly Fishing Expo in Boise, Idaho, March, 2008.

The general recommendation is fish it with a floating line and drag free float. To do this in moving water you can cast upstream, across stream with a reach cast, downstream with a wiggle cast (high cast or draw cast also work downstream), or just pile line and leader out there and hope for the best. You can get more precise instructions from a FFF Certified Casting Instructor.

A good floating fly is sometimes needed when there is a gale like wind blowing across a lake. Sometimes I will cast straight downwind and wait for a take. Other times I will cast crosswind and let the line and fly get blown downwind. Normally the fly cannot be seen so just look for a big splash an appropriate distance beyond your line. The fish could be hitting a drowned natural or your fly, so tighten the line just in case.

Ed likes turned up eye hooks because he has a lot of them, and it looks a little like mayfly eyes.

Materials List:

Hook: Eagle Claw 159, size 10

Thread: Black, 14/0

Tail: Moose mane

Back: Closed cell foam, gray, 2 mm thick, 5/32-inch wide

Body: Uni-Stretch floss, yellow

Wings: Zelon, white

Hackle: Grizzly

Tying Steps:



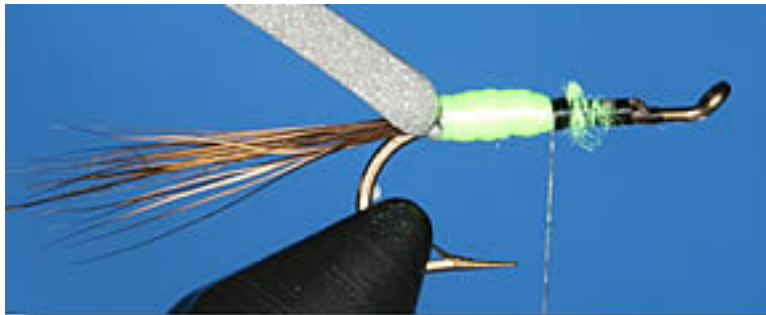
1. Start thread on front of hook, wrap back to bend, and then forward to about 1/4 shank length back from eye. Make sure everything is covered. It is important to come back to bend because of the way the foam and moose mane are used. (More later.)



2. Tie on moose mane wrapping along the shank to where the wing will be. The tail is about 1 and 1/4 shank lengths long. Then bring the thread back to the bend.



3. Put on foam and tie it all the way back so it depresses the tail a little. When the foam is pulled forward later the tail will be firm and straight. The front of the foam is a little behind mid-shank. Leave the thread at the front of the foam.



4. Tie Uni-Stretch at front of foam. Wrap it back to the bend and then forward to tie in point. Make sure everything is covered. Wrap the Uni-Stretch tightly. Pull on it a little bit before you trim so it will snap back leaving no loose ends. Leave thread at front of floss.



5. Pull foam forward gently so the cells are not collapsed the, and hold it a little toward yourself before tightening thread. Thread torque will bring it to center. Tie it down firmly, and trim excess foam.



6. Wind thread forward to front of moose mane, (about 1/3 shank length back from the eye), where the wing will be tied in. Tie Zelon across hook shank wrapping lightly a couple of times. Figure-eight it tighter a couple of times. Post each wing (wrap up and down each wing a couple of times). Wrap around the wings to stand them up and separate them the right degree. He likes to use Zelon because it doesn't collapse like other materials do. He has tried things like poly and trilobal fiber, but they don't work as well.



7. Select a hackle with barbs (fibers) that are about 1-1/2 gap widths long, and tie it on in front of foam. Make sure to leave bare quill above the thread as you tie in hackle. This way when you start wrapping the barbs wont distort as easily.



8. If the barbs distort as you wrap, trim some of the barbs that start against the shank. Make 4- 6 wraps behind the wings and the 2 to 4 in front. Tie off hackle securely. Trim tip. Half hitch against the hackle with a half hitch tool. Then you don't have to use special hackle control tools.



9. Whip finish a couple of times. With 14/0 thread you can do this and still have a small head. Trim wing at top of hackle.

Closing comments: Zelon is a little hard to find, but it is available at Blue Ribbon Flies in West Yellowstone, MT. The same thing, but called Z-lon, is available though Orvis and Cabela's websites. This fly is easier to tie than the traditional deer hair Humpy that I teach in class. The traditional deer hair tie forces the students to think seriously about proportions and being systematic. Perhaps this one should be added to show a pattern that is easier to tie and also

catches fish. After all catching fish is the purpose behind these patterns and words. Please carefully release all fish so you can play with them another day.

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