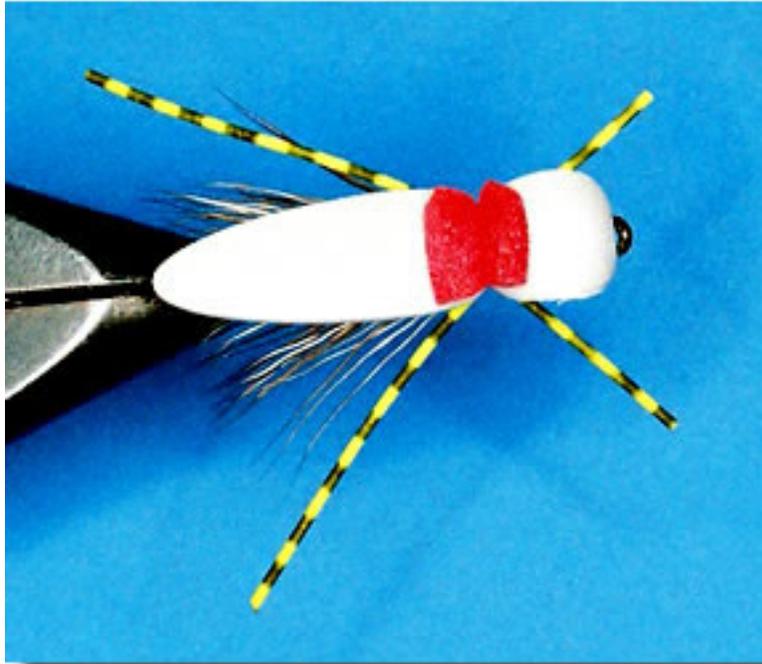


PINK POOKIE



By Bob Bates

If you look around most fly fishing towns you will find chalk boards with river conditions and what flies fish are hitting. Such was the case, August 2005 in Livingston, Montana. As I waited to pay for my breakfast I studied the chalk board. It looked pretty normal: PMD (Pale Morning Dun), BWO (Blue Wing Olive), Pink Pookie, -- Pink Whaaaat? I looked at it several times, and it was still "Pink Pookie."

My question was answered at the 40th Anniversary FFF Show and Conclave. I stopped by the table where Koichi Kawai from the Hatch Finders Flyshop in Livingston, Montana, www.hatchfinders.com, was showing us how he tied the Pink Pookie.

Koichi told me some about its development, but Dean Reiner, Owner of Hatch Finders Flyshop sent me a more complete story about the Pink Pookie.

"At the beginning of the 2003 hopper season a guide from Bozeman came into the shop and asked if we had any pink body hoppers. Pink not being a standard color for hoppers. When I said we don't, he asked if we could come up with a pattern for the next day. My partner Koichi Kawai and I decided to give it a try. Just playing around we tied up 10 different patterns 6 each, and the next day we gave them out to him and the guides working out of my shop. Their reports -- pink was very attractive to the trout. We had tied hoppers the standard way and with foam for speed. The guides favored the foam hoppers because they floated well and didn't require dressing as often. Koichi and I kept playing around with different ways to tie the foam on the hook and with different colored legs until everyone agreed on the best pattern."

"The next step was coming up with a name for the fly. Just calling it a pink hopper would do nothing for the mystique of tying a new pattern, we needed a hook to get people interested in the pattern."

"In the course of tying many dozen flies a day some eventually end up on the floor. My dog Pookie never paid much attention to what we were tying, but when one of the pink hoppers fell on the floor, she jumped right on it and began tossing it into the air. Not wanting her to find a hook I took it away from her. Then she stood up on

her hind legs pleading with me to let her have it. As she was standing up she exposed her very pink belly, Koichi and I thought that would be a great name for the fly, hence “The Pink Pookie.”

“After a week of handing out the fly as an experimental pattern the number of requests for the fly grew to the point where we had to put it into the inventory. For the next 45 days we had guys standing 3 deep at the vise at 6 in the morning waiting for us to turn out the fly. We must have tied 200 dozen that first summer; for every year since it has been the most popular pattern for hoppers. Pookie has become the most popular dog on the river; everyone knows her.”

For many of us a windy day in July or August is the best time to fish a hopper. The wind blows them off the vegetation and makes it hard for them to fly. They sometimes fall from streamside vegetation. Also when flying they sometimes run out of steam and crash. If over water they land with a splash, and so this is the usual way to land a hopper pattern. No delicate casting required. If you are fishing around cut banks always try to float the hopper right along the bank. You can never tell what kind of monster is waiting there. I have a friend who fishes small streams, and he often throws the hopper on the bank and then hops it into the water.

Materials:

Hook: Dai Riki 280 Sizes 8 and 10

Thread: Gudebrod, Red 6/0

Body: Pink foam, 2 mm

Overbody/Wing: Gray foam, 2 mm

Under wing: Elk hair

Legs: Centipede legs black and yellow, medium

Highlight: Red foam, 2 mm

Tying Steps:

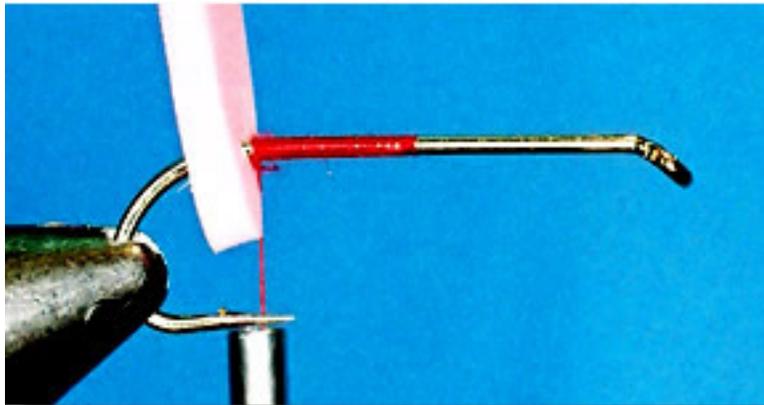
Both the body and the wing foam are cut with foam cutters. The shape is Chernobyl Ant body with a tapered end. Use the medium cutter for the body and the large cutter for the wing. You can use the same cutters for many other patterns. If you are good with the scissors you can cut the shapes. The medium is 38 mm long by 6 mm wide. The large is 43 long by 7 mm wide.



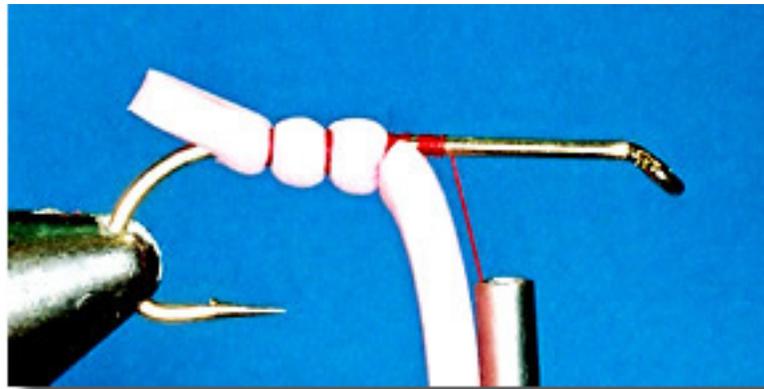
1. Get a dog named Pookie.



2. Push hook through tapered end of body foam.



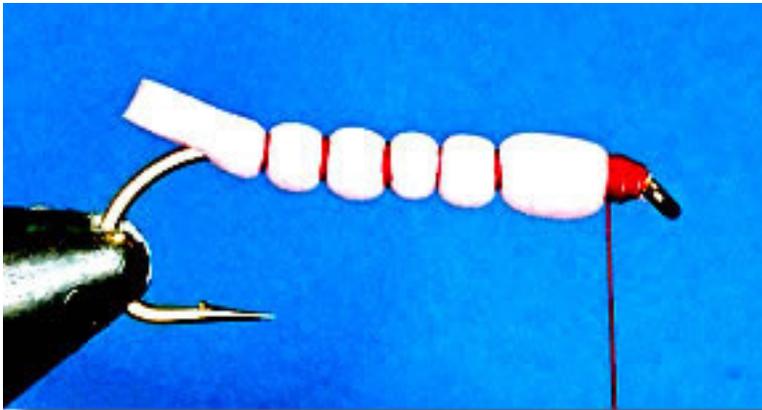
3. Slide foam onto hook. Start thread about mid-shank and wrap rearward to bend.



4. Secure foam to hook tightly by pulling the foam up around hook with the thread. Make the tie (segment) perpendicular to hook. Pull foam down and advance thread two or three wraps to position of next segment.



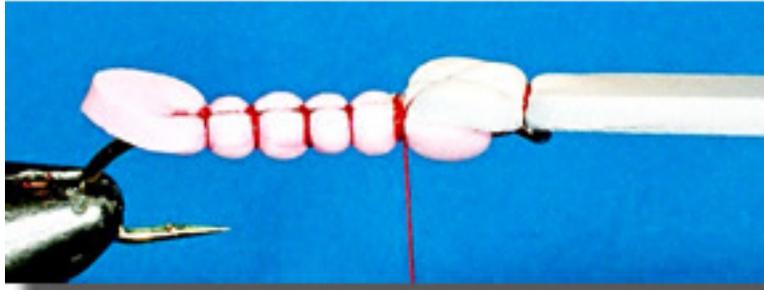
5. Continue making segments until you are about two segments (about 3/16-inch) from the eye. Hold foam down and wrap thread to the eye. Secure foam close to eye. Koichi tied four segments before the large one, and a picture Dean sent to me had three before the large segment. So suit yourself, three or four.



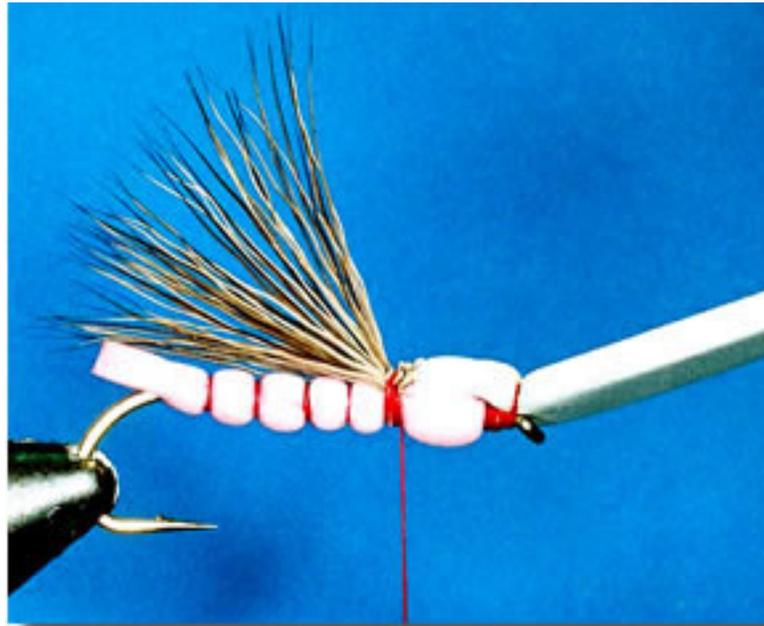
6. Trim foam close to thread and wrap thread to hide cut end. (I snip the foam on each side as close as possible to the thread wrap, and then pull down on the bill to snip the center.)



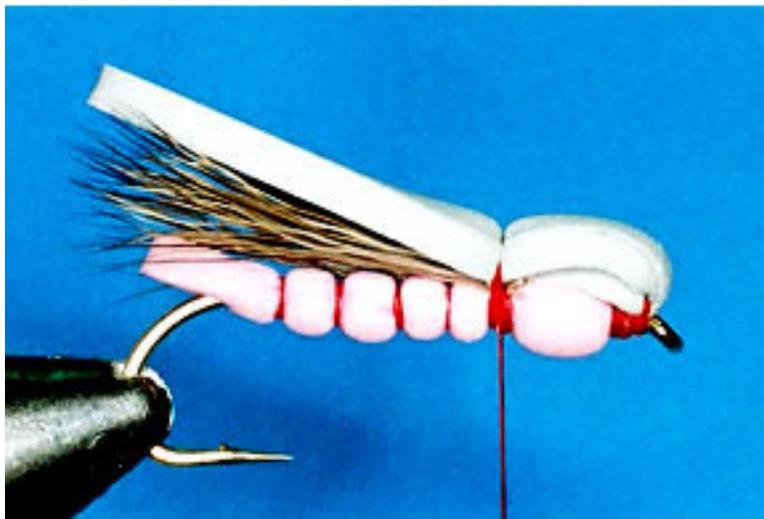
7. Put some Zap-A-Gap on top of foam to be sure it is secure. While the Zap-A-Gap is setting you can go to the next step.



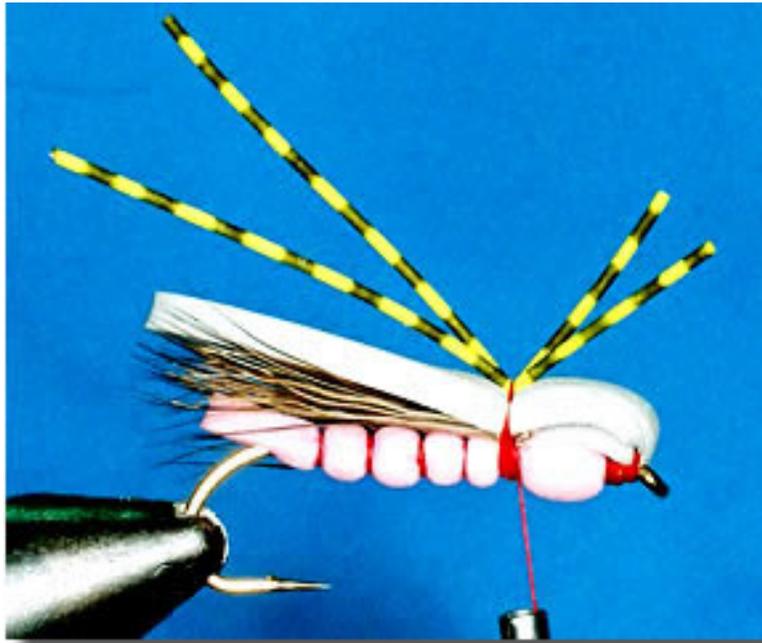
8. Bring thread to top of hook and move it rearward to put one wrap around foam and hook at the back of the big segment. Measure the wing foam to be a little longer than the hook. Then add a little more for the big segment and trim cut end to a taper. Tie the taper securely at the back of the big segment with the wing pointing forward. Then move the thread forward tightly over the foam and take two thread wraps behind the eye before moving the thread rearward to the back of the big segment.



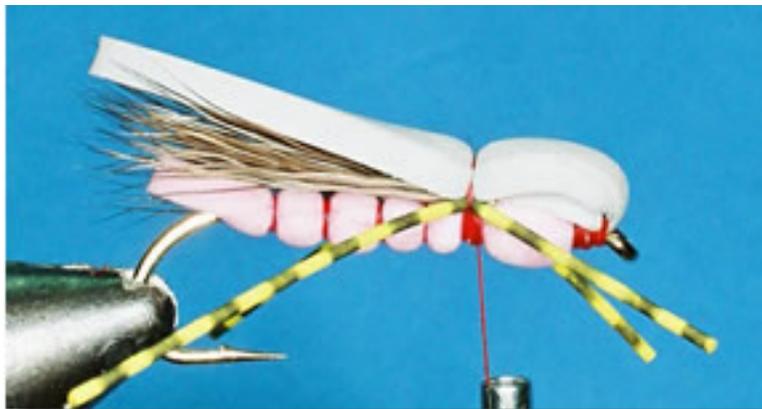
9. Trim a small bunch of deer hair, clean out the under fur and stack. Place on top of hook so tips are longer than body, trim just in front of where the thread is hanging and secure. Don't let the hair spin. Tipping up the back of the deer hair makes catching it with the thread easier.



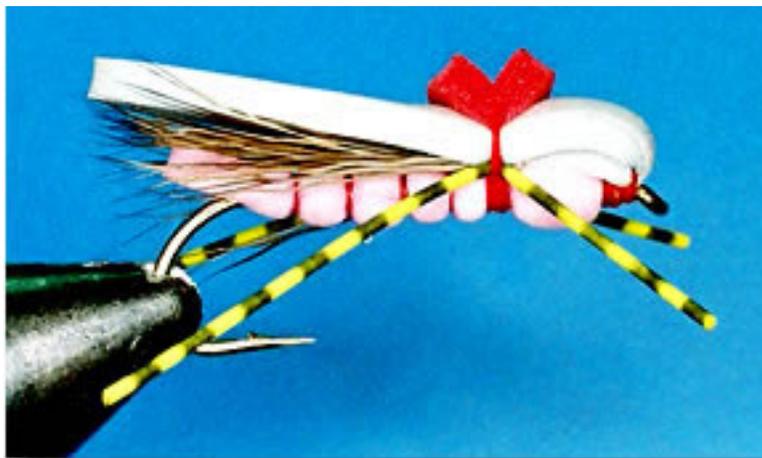
10. Fold the wing back and secure.



11. Take two pieces of round rubber legs about 1.5 inches long and place them on top of foam wing, put one or two thread wraps over both of them and let the bobbin hang. Adjust if necessary so 1/3rd of leg is in front.



12. Then pull one pair of legs down to bottom of wing. Repeat on other side.



13. Tie a piece of red foam on top of wing to make the hopper easier to see. Whip finish securely over the red foam. Put a little head cement on the bottom thread wraps if you like.



14. This is what the fish sees.

Closing comments: This is a pretty easy fly to tie so get yourself ready for hopper time. Some of our hoppers have yellow bodies or even an orange shade. Try the pink first then, if necessary match your colors and invent a Yellow Pookie, Orange Pookie or what ever Pookie. The main thing is tie a few, go to your favorite water and use them to catch (and gently release) a few fish or a whole lot of fish.

I had a little trouble finding yellow and black centipede or tarantula legs, something about the factory that made them closing down. Dean has them at the Hatch Finders Flyshop and some are available through Cabela's. Also some shops now have black and medium yellow which works fine. Dean said that any color works.

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