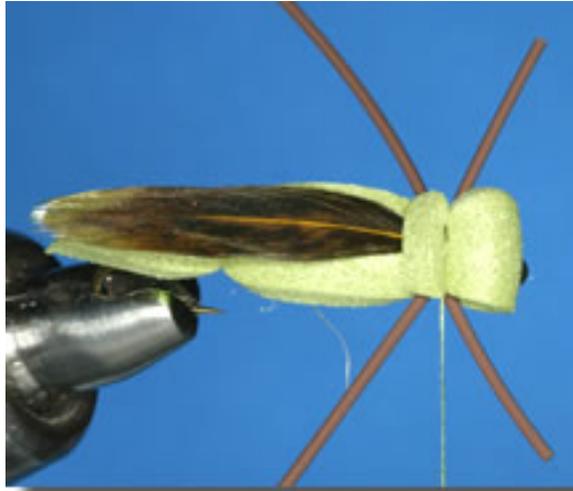


### **MILLARD'S HOPPER**



By Bob Bates

### **Farmers brace for grasshopper invasion**

This headline in *U.S.A. Today* (5-26-2010) and a similar one in an e-mail from 5 Rivers Lodge in Dillon, Montana tell us that we had better get busy tying hoppers. This year, 2010, a major infestation of grasshoppers could hit Wyoming, Montana, Nebraska and the Dakotas. (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture). While it is bad news for farmers and ranchers, fish will have lots to eat, and fly anglers should be ready to feed them phony hoppers. About 400 grasshopper species call the 17 Western states home.

Almost as though he had advanced knowledge, Dave Millard of Tumwater, Washington was tying terrestrials at the March 2010 Fly Tying Expo in Albany, OR. For him this pattern has been good for many years. He didn't have a name for it, and he thought of calling it Dave's Hopper. But there is already one called that (Fly of the Month, August 1998) so he settled on Millard's Hopper. The colors and size he chose are for the hoppers where he fishes. Look around your fishing area and tie hoppers to look like the ones you find, i.e. "match the hatch." Hoppers can be gray, brown, yellow, orange and even pink (Fly of the Month, June 2006) to name a few colors.

Grasshoppers hatch on land so it isn't until they fall into the water they can be eaten by fish. Sometimes they lose power flying over a lake or stream and crash. Other times they fall off of overhanging vegetation. The usual rule for fishing a hopper is to make your fly land with a splash. This is supposed to attract the fish. Wind is also your friend when it comes to hopper fishing. Hoppers are not strong fliers so they lose control on windy days, and can become fish food. Fish the shoreline in lakes or streams, but don't neglect checking farther out for long distance fliers. In streams I usually lean toward a drag free drift, and in lakes I let the hopper sit then wiggle it a little. On small streams a friend would throw his fly on the opposite shore and then hop it off into the water.

## Materials List:

**Hook:** TMC 200R, size 8

**Thread:** Gray-Green, 6/0

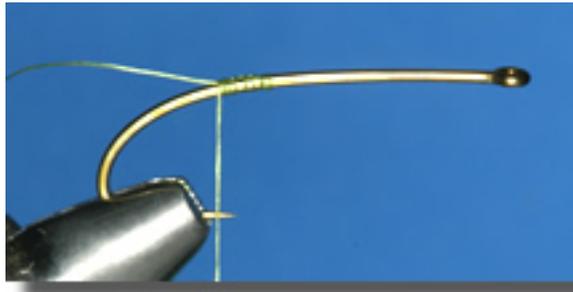
**Dubbing:** Light olive

**Body:** Light olive foam, 2 mm thick, 1/4-inch wide

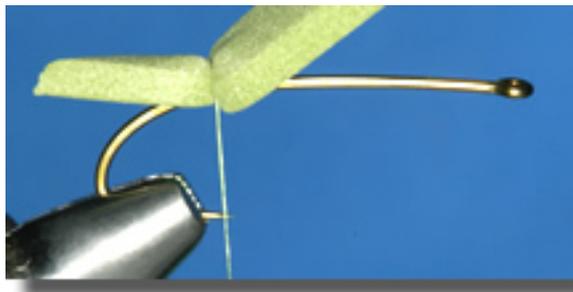
**Wing case:** Olive dyed brown hen feather.

**Legs:** Round rubber, brown

## Tying steps:



1. Smash barb before you start tying the fly. Start thread at back of hook.



2. Trim foam at an angle that looks good, and tie it on to hook between point and barb.



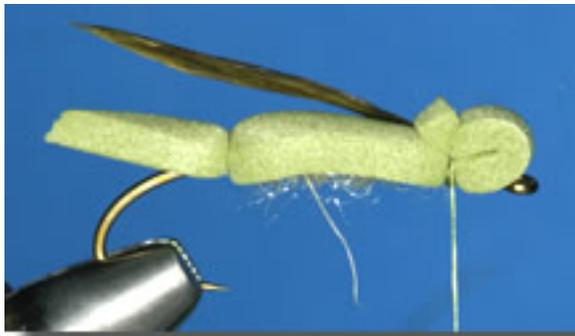
3. Use dubbing to cover shank, and make the body look a little better.



4. Hold up foam, and wrap dubbed thread forward to within 2 – 3 eye lengths of eye. Pull foam forward, and tie it down.



5. For the wing case use a dyed olive brown hen feather. Strip off fuzzy stuff, put on a little glue and stroke it to make it narrower (See top view). Let glue dry before tying it on as shown.



6. Pull foam back and secure it. Trim excess.



7. Attach one piece of brown rubber on each side. After securing legs move thread forward under hook and whip finish or half hitch under folded back foam. Trim front legs so they look nice (see top view). Hold back legs along body and trim them behind back of hook.



8. Turn fly over, and put a little head cement on bottom thread winds.

### **Closing comments**

This is one hopper you should have in your box. It is not difficult to tie, and you can easily change the color to meet your needs. Keep tight lines, and release the fish carefully 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](mailto:flyofthemonth@fedflyfishers.org)