

**PEEK-A-BOO RIB**



By Bob Bates

**Comments:**

Chironomid patterns are popular with many anglers. There are literally thousands of them to choose from. At the 11<sup>th</sup> Fly Fishing Symposium in Castlegar, British Columbia, Canada I had a chance to meet some anglers who spend most of their time tying and fishing chironomid patterns. It was produced by the West Kootenay Fly Club and the Castlegar Sports Center. Pat St. Pierre had two fly boxes full of chironomids. There were several hundred patterns on display.



The other side of this fly box and the other fly box had similar displays. White, black, gold and silver beads were used. Most of them were metal, but there were a few glass beads. There were different hook sizes also. He tied the Peek-A-Boo Rib as a demonstration.

How does a person choose which fly to use? It starts with some knowledge of the insects in the lake or stream. Having a few successful friends who will tell you what they are using also helps. The choice can be refined after the first fish is caught. Some anglers will use a water filled squeeze bulb to pump the fish, and see what it has eaten most recently.

Often a strike indicator and floating fly line are used in water depths up to 20 feet or so. Suspend the fly just above the bottom, and strike when the indicator moves. Other anglers don't use an indicator. They let the fly sink to the bottom, and then very slowly retrieve it. I mean VERY slowly: Just enough movement to straighten the slight memory curves that develop in any floating fly line.

Another method is used in deep water lakes. By deep I mean 30 to 50 feet. I first saw this some 30 years ago, but didn't have a name for it. Anchor your floating device at both ends. Use a fast sinking fly line. Attach forceps or some other weight to the fly and toss it over the side. Mark the fly line when the weight is on the bottom, retrieve the weight, toss everything back and wait for something to happen. If a felt tip pen is used to mark the line, soon there are so many marks that which one to use becomes a question. Each angler has their own way of marking the depth. One that seems to work: With the weight on the bottom reel in until the rod tip is at the water surface, then without moving the reel retrieve the weight and toss everything back. When fishing, the distance between the rod tip and the water is the distance the fly is above the bottom. Now it is a popular technique in eastern Washington, USA and British Columbia, Canada. Four or five years ago a member of my fly club gave it a name: DANGLING. You have a direct connection to the fish when it takes the fly. If the rod tip suddenly goes underwater you probably have a fish on.

#### **Material List:**

**Hook:** Scud hook, 2XS like TMC 2487 size 12

**Gills:** Stillwater Solutions, Antron, white

**Weight:** Brass or other, 1/8 inch

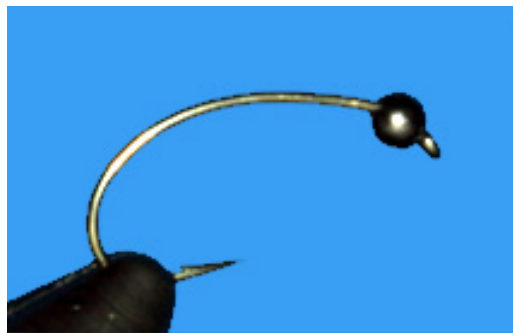
**Underbody:** Flashabou, Gun Metal, it has a slight blue tint

**Overlay:** H2O Products, Clear

**Rib:** Black and red Flashabou

**Thorax:** Thread 6/0, rusty brown or rusty orange

#### **Tying steps:**



1. Pinch barb and slide on bead. Put bead on with larger hole forward.



2. Push bead to back of hook. Put four thread wraps behind the eye, secure Antron on top of hook with one or two thread wraps and whip finish with only two wraps. A couple of half hitches also work; cut thread.



3. Slide bead forward, and reattach thread behind bead.



4. Tie on two pieces of Gun Metal Flashabou, one piece each of overlay material and rib Flashabou (red and black) right behind bead.



5. Wind thread rearward over all of the Flashabou, etc. Return thread to back of bead.



6. Wind Gun Metal Flashabou forward. Start at back of hook, and wind to halfway point then start piling it on a little to make a very slight taper. Secure behind eye.



7. Wind the overlay forward, and secure behind eye. Can use any gray/silver material.



8. Wrap red and black Flashabou. Maneuver the two strands apart and counter wrap. Have the black on top of the red but with a little of the red showing. The red seems to be a little wider than the black. Tie off behind the bead with couple of whip finishes and trim thread. Trim Antron enough to hide eye of hook.



9. Wind a rusty brown or rusty orange thorax in the space behind the bead. Coat the fly with super glue for extra protection. Avoid cements that have acetone in them because it can eat through some materials.

**Closing comments:** I usually try to stick with traditional patterns. However, the more I watch successful tiers/anglers the more I see it is limiting. Try different things. Thousands of different flies can be tied using one style or one basic pattern, like the Ice Cream Cone. If they work great. If they do not work one day they might on another day. Also, try different sizes. I started tying flies because high lake fish in Colorado wanted size 22 and 24 bugs. At that time shops didn't carry small flies, and they wanted two to three times the usual price to tie them.

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)