

Tying Bench

Masked Bandit ...Tied by Layne (Smitty) Smith



This is the February meeting fly that I have chosen for targeting bass at Saturday's Walsingham Reservoir outing. Fish this pattern as you would any baitfish pattern -- around cover with slow strips then a few *short*, quick strips to imitate a nervous prey (don't make *long* quick strips as this will pull it out of the strike zone). You can fish it deep by adding lead wraps to drop it down along drop offs. This fly can be fished in saltwater as well, though I would change the fur from squirrel to rabbit as it will create a larger profile for larger predatory fish like snook and reds.

Materials

Hook: Gamakatsu Octopus size #6

Thread: Danville flat-waxed nylon light gray

Belly: Pearl blue angel hair

Wing: Natural gray Pine Squirrel zonker strip

Collar: Natural gray Pine Squirrel cross-cut strip (if available, or regular zonker strip if not)

Head: 3mm Fish Skulls fish mask. You can prepare the head by attaching eyes ahead of time and setting aside to cure.

Eyes: 1/8" molded eyes

Cement: Zap-a-gap or your favorite CA cement and Solarez UV Resin

Tying Instructions

Step 1: De-barb hook and place in vise. Wrap thread on front half of hook, cut thread and then back-wrap to about 3/16" behind eye of hook and coat the back-wrapped portion with any type cement.

Step 2: Tie in clump of Angel Hair (approx. 1/8" thickness when tied down) onto hook making sure it remains on the top side of the hook. Pinching the material, take your scissors and cut the material up and rearwards at a 45-degree angle so it measures about 1/2" long at the bottom of the taper to 3/4" long at the top of the taper.

Step 3: Taper rear end of pine squirrel strip to a point and measure to twice hook length, and cut. If you are tying more than one fly at a time, pre-measure and cut zonker wings in advance. Attach strip on top of Angel Hair at the same tie-in point. Secure with several thread wraps.

Step 4: Take a piece of cross-cut pine squirrel (or zonker) and tie in securely on top of previous strip finishing your thread wraps in front on the bare hook. Palmer strip for one and a half turns, finishing on top of bare hook shank. Secure with thread wraps and cut off excess strip.

Step 5: Build up a decent tapered thread head, whip finish and cut your thread.

Step 6: Apply cement to top and bottom of thread head and slide on prepared fish mask (i.e. fish mask with eyes attached ahead of time with CA cement and over-coated with UV Resin). Re-attach thread and build small thread dam to keep the fish mask from sliding forward.

Step 7: Coat thread dam and eyes with UV Resin and cure.

Smitty