

Balrog

Pete Adams



This simple streamer was originally created for Tiger Fish in Tanzania, Golden Dorado in Argentina and Blacktip Shark in the Bahamas, and was tied on a Tiemco 600SP heavy duty hook. It is often fished with a 300- to 350-grain sinking head line with a short, 40- or 60-pound level leader and 20- to 40-pound steel bite tippet. It has also proven itself with Largemouth Bass, Pike and Pickerel (in black or olive) and Striped Bass (in white), and then is usually fished on a 0X or heavier tippet. If Pickerel or Pike are expected, a 20- or 30-pound nylon or fluorocarbon bite tippet may be required. The fly shown here is tied on a 4/0 straight-shank worm hook.

Materials

- Hook** 3/0 - 5/0 straight-shank bass worm hook, regular or weedless
- Weight** Lead-free wire (optional)
- Thread** 3/0 Danville Flat Waxed Nylon or equivalent, black
- Tail** 6-8 large hackles (schlappen, if available), black
- Flash** Medium or large Flashabou, red
- Eyes** Large strung plastic necklace beads (red), large dumbbell eyes (red with black pupils) or 3D plastic eyes (3/8- or 1/2-inch diameter, red)
- Body** Baitfish Emulator, black

Tying Steps

1. Crush the small barbs on the hook shank and the larger barb on the hook spear, behind the point.
2. Lay in some rough crisscross layers of thread to serve as a friction base for the tail.
3. Prepare 6 to 8 large hackles. Strip off the marabou fuzz from the shaft, leaving a section twice the length of the hook. The fly in the picture was tied on a 4/0 hook, which is about 2 inches long. The tail is then 4 inches long.
4. Lay the hackles together so that half of them cup inward from one side and the other half cup inward from the other side. Tie the hackles in at the point where the hook shank ends and the bend begins. Wrap over the stems to secure them and cut any excess stem. Return the thread to about 1/2 inch from the tie-in point.
5. Take 3 strands of Flashabou, fold them over the thread, and bring them up to the side of the hook while you wrap the thread around the shank. After the first wrap, gently pull the Flashabou to the rear, alongside the hackle tail, and add more thread wraps to secure. Bring the thread back to about 1/2 inch from the tie-in point and then do the same thing on the other side of the tail. Trim the Flashabou to just beyond the hackle tail.
6. Tie in the strung plastic beads or dumbbell eye about 2 eye-widths from the rear of the hook eye. Lay in a number of crisscross wraps to secure and add some head cement or super glue if desired to secure. If glue-on 3D eyes will be used, just skip this step.
7. Tie in a piece of Baitfish Emulator at the shank/bend point so that when you wrap it forward the fibers extend to the rear.
8. Wrap the Baitfish Emulator forward in slightly open turns until you are 1/2 to 2/3 of the way up the shank. At this point, start overlapping the turns to form a denser head. If fished properly, this will cause the fly to dip and dart a bit, with the tail, flash and rear fibers waving in the current.
9. Continue wrapping the Baitfish Emulator forward, wrap a figure-eight around the bead or dumbbell eyes (if present), add a couple of wraps between the dumbbell eyes and the hook eye, tie off, and cut the excess.
10. Comb the body fibers to eliminate snarls.
11. Pull the fibers back (wet fingers help) and form a neat thread head. Whip finish, cut the excess thread, add a coat or two of head cement, and let dry.
12. If glue-on 3D eyes are to be used, just glue them on each side with a dab of super glue gel or other thick adhesive. Make sure the glue contacts the shank for durability and that the eyes are even so the fly swims true. Hold them in place until the glue sets.

An open-loop knot is recommended to allow the fly plenty of freedom to wobble. A weedless hook works well if there's lots of structure. Just pull it out through the structure gently. Bass worm hooks are usually made of good quality steel, so you don't need to be gentle when setting the hook and fighting the fish.