

Captain Baz's Favorite Redfish Fly... Russ Shields

MATERIALS

HOOK	Mustad 34007, size 2
THREAD	White 3/0 or 210 denier flat waxed nylon
EYES	Nickel plated brass hourglass, 3/16", painted red with black pupil
BELLY	White bucktail
WING	Copper flashabou and tan bucktail



TYING INSTRUCTIONS



1. Place hook in vise. Lay thread base from eye of hook to barb. Return thread to ¼" behind eye. Attach eyes there with series of figure 8 wraps followed by 6-8 horizontal wraps (under brass eyes but over shank). These turns will lock eyes in place. Return thread in front of eyes.



2. Cut a swatch of white bucktail about a kitchen match thick or a little more. Stack the bucktail so the fine ends are near the same length. Cut the blunt ends square to form a belly about 2 ¾" long (shorter for smaller hook, longer for larger hook). Place bucktail atop hook with blunt ends aligned just behind hook eye. Take 3 "soft wraps" around bucktail and then apply firmer thread pressure by pulling bobbin up from bottom. This upward pressure will keep the bucktail from spreading around shank. Cover the bucktail with a series of wraps between eyes and eye of hook. Also cover the bucktail behind the eyes with a series of wraps all the way back to just above hook barb. Return thread to just behind eye of hook with several wide wraps. Trim loose ends of bucktail around the hook eye.



3. Turn hook over in vise with hook point up. Cut 3-4 full length strands of flashabou. Double flashabou around tying thread and tie in the strands (now 6-8) with a few thread wraps while holding strands so that half are on each side of hook. Don't pull hard on flashabou or it will curl. Cut and prepare a swatch of tan bucktail the same as the white. Tie in the same way between eyes and eye of hook. NOTE: Do not tie the tan bucktail behind the brass eyes. Wrap a neat, tapered thread head and coat with head cement or epoxy.

Notes: Many of the fly-caught redfish you see in Captain Baz's Fishing Reports are caught using this Clouser Minnow. The copper flash is a must as are the red/black eyes. I paint my own with red and black nail polish and a simple foam jig. Gulf Breeze Bait and Tackle carries a product called "Fire Fly" that also works well in place of the flashabou.

YakAttack Clouser.... From Bob Clouser' Original

HOOK	Mustad 34007, size 2
THREAD	Red 3/0 or flat-waxed nylon
EYES	3/16" brass "Real Eyes" with tape decal inserts
FLASH	Gold flashabou and peacock crystal flash
BELLY	Natural white yak hair
BACK	Ocean green yak hair



1. Secure hook in vise and lay thread base from eye to bend. Tie in eyes with a dozen figure 8 wraps about 1/3 hook length back from hook eye. Take a dozen horizontal wraps around and below the eyes but above the shank. Add a drop of head cement to lock the eyes in place. Tie in 6-8 strands each of crystal flash and flashabou behind the eyes and cover with thread to the bend. Return thread to just behind hook eye.



2. Cut a 3" length of white yak hair about a kitchen match thick for the fly's belly (remember, the fly flips in the water to ride hook point up). Tie in behind the hook eye, wrap thread over yak hair back to the brass eyes, wrap thread under the shank to just behind the brass eyes and make a dozen or so wraps behind the eyes. Return thread under shank to just forward of brass eyes.



3. Turn fly upside down in vise. Cut 3" length of green yak hair a kitchen match thick for the fly's back. Tie in behind the hook eye and wrap thread over hair back to the brass eyes. Wrap a neat "nose" making sure the yak hair is completely covered. Turn the fly belly-side-up in vise and whip finish. Remove fly from vise and insert tape decal eyes. Coat eyes and thread wraps with 5 minute epoxy and turn fly by hand or machine until epoxy hardens (about 5 minutes). Hang fly to cure for at least 8 hours.

NOTES: The first morning I tried the YakAttack, I caught a 28" Spanish mackerel (my largest ever), 4 other Spanish, a 27" speckled trout (my second largest ever) plus half a dozen other specks, all but one keeper size. The fly looks unruly in the vise but is lovely in the water taking on the look of a translucent, tapered minnow. The flash tends to stay inside the hair which adds to the translucent look. The yak hair compresses under thread pressure much better than bucktail and is generally easier to tie with. Though not as durable as super hair, it seems to hold up better than bucktail. It is less buoyant than bucktail but more so than super hair. Yak hair comes in many colors and is comparable in price to bucktail. Give it a try. As for me, I may have a lot of bucktail to donate to next year's auction....Jerry Aldridge

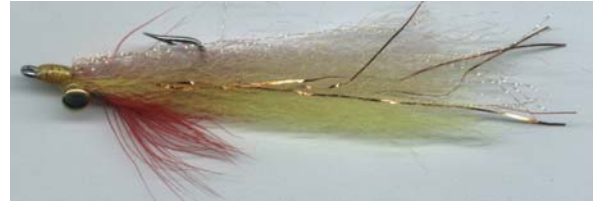


Red Beard Clousers... Jerry Aldridge

The speckled trout fishing has been good on the grass flats with lots of fish , mostly small, fairly eager to take your well presented Clouser Minnow. Action on poppers and gurglers has been surprisingly slow , especially considering the water temperature in the high 80s. Look for intermittent patches of sand and grass, changes in depth (edges and ledges) plus any "nervous water" you see. Two to eight feet of water is the normal range; the deeper you get the better chance you have at the occasional lady fish, Spanish mackerel or blue fish.

The Naval Live Oaks and Big Sabine Bay have been fishing well but Shoreline Park, the east and west sides of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the area between Deer Point and Fair Point have been mysteriously slow, at least for me.

Good Clouser colors have been tan and olive, tan and yellow, dark green and white, and chartreuse and white. I have started tying some of my Clousers with red hackle beards to represent blood red gills or perhaps just for a little variety in tying. They seem to work at least as well as their beardless counterparts so give them a try. A couple are pictured here..



Tying Clouser Minnows for Speckled Trout... Jerry Aldridge

In Jackson Hole, Wyoming, the annual "One Fly" competition pits anglers from all over the world to see who can catch and release the most and largest trout (the fresh water variety). Hoppers, stonefly nymphs and dry flies, chernobyl ants and club sandwiches are just a few of the many different flies used. If a similar contest were held for speckled trout in the Pensacola area, the majority of anglers would use a Clouser Minnow. A few topwater enthusiasts would use their poppers and gurglers, others might try their Crazy Charlies, Gotchas, deceivers, epoxy minnows, etc. but most would stick with the Clouser.

So let's take a look at a possible winning Clouser starting with the hook. Standard length steel hooks such as the Mustad 3407 and 34007 fill the need nicely. The 3407 is cadmium steel that will corrode fairly quickly if you have to break a fish off. The 34007 is stainless steel that is shinier, less likely to corrode quickly and is a hook-eye longer for a given hook size. Other manufacturers produce similar hooks as good or better but probably more expensive. Whichever brand you choose, buy sizes 2 and 4 to start with. Those who would like to tie in a wider range of sizes could go as large as 1/0 and as small as 8. The size of the rod you fish with and your casting competence should be factors in choosing the right hook size. Yeah I know there are some who can cast a 2/0 clouser with heavy lead eyes 90 feet with a 2 weight rod. But for the average angler casting with a 7 or 8 weight, size 4 clousers are an excellent choice. Don't forget to sharpen the hook and bend down the barb!

Size 3/0 or 6/0 thread in white, black, red and brown will more than cover thread needs as far as the fish are concerned. The advanced or intermediate tyer will probably buy a wider range of colors to match or complement the color of wing material chosen.

The distinguishing feature of the clouser is the eyes tied on top the hook shank usually 1/3 shank length behind the eye of the hook. It is these weighted eyes that cause the fly to ride "hook point up" and to stream through the water with an up and down "jigging motion" like a wounded minnow. Eyes can be light (bead chain) to fish fairly shallow or very heavy (lead or even tungsten) to fish deep. A look at a tying catalog will show lots of choices including bead chain, cast lead, machined lead, brass in hour glass shape, brass indented to hold decal eyes, etc., some finished or pre-painted in a variety of colors. My favorite is the silver finished brass eyes, hour-glass shaped and indented for decal eyes, either flat or 3-dimensional. The decals also come in many colors; I usually use silver or gold with a black pupil. An eye unpainted or without a decal may catch just as many specks but a tyer must tie to please himself as well as the fish.

Clouser wings may be tied with many natural and artificial materials. Bucktail and other tails (squirrel, calf, fox, raccoon, etc.) plus body hair (bear, yak, goat, etc.) will do for folks who choose to tie with natural material. Artificial include fishhair, ultra hair, super hair, unique hair, neer hair, craft fur, etc. Some of the artificials foul easily but are generally more durable, sink quicker, cost less per fly and are easier to work with. However, nothing artificial that I have seen will so accurately mimic the shape of a minnow as high quality bucktail with its tapered hairs. The material I use for most of my clousers is super hair.

These days, lots of accent materials are available to the tyer to add shiny stuff and flash to the wing. Brand names such as flashabou, holographic flashabou, crystal (or Krystal) flash, angel hair and sparkle flash, all available in lots of colors, are widely sold. My favorites are the simple, cheap and most widely stocked - flashabou and crystal flash. To start with, you don't need many colors; silver, gold and pearl will do just fine.

So, how do you tie all this together (and in what color combinations) to tie the winning fly? It would really be nice to be able to give an unqualified answer. If there really was one magic fly for specks or any other species for that matter, what would fly tyers do with their time and how would purveyors of tying materials make a living? If I had to choose one fly knowing nothing of conditions beforehand, it would probably be the red and yellow (see Kevin's article on front page). Shown below are some other favorites that are always in my tackle bag when I'm not in a one-fly contest.



PUMPKIN - This one is tied with "fishhair", the only artificial I can find the right shade of orange. I usually tie it with bucktail. The inner accent is copper (gold would work fine) flashabou; the outer is orange crystal flash. The eyes are brass with orange decal inserts. A great color for fall and winter.

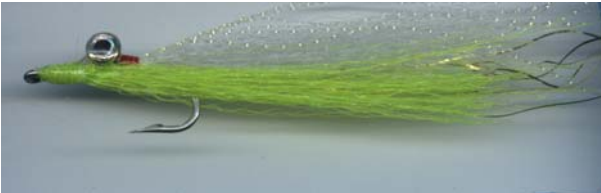


TAN/OLIVE - "Super hair" is the wing material. The inner accent is copper flashabou; the outer is root beer crystal flash. The eyes are brass with pearl 3-D holographic inserts. A good all around color combo.

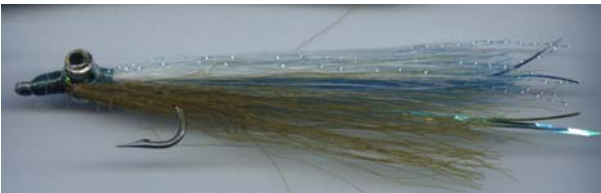
Tying Clouser Minnows for Speckled Trout...continued



SMOKE/BLACK - Super hair, silver flashabou, black crystal flash, brass eyes with silver inserts. The “go to” fly in deep or murky water or winter time.



CHARTREUSE/WHITE - Super hair, gold flashabou, chartreuse crystal flash, brass eyes with pearl inserts, red thread “gills”. The go to fly for summertime grass bed or “under the lights” fishing. For some reason, this color doesn’t work as well in the winter, for me anyway.



OLIVE/BLUE/WHITE - Fishair, rainbow flashabou, blue rainbow crystal flash, brass eyes with silver decal inserts. A good all around combo. I would tie this one even if it didn’t catch fish because it’s so pretty. I think I first saw it tied by “member emeritus” Vance Cook;

A “Unique” Clouser Trout Can’t Resist....Kevin Cohenour

It was just a couple weeks before Christmas, when former Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida President Jerry Aldridge called me to ask if I would like to go fishing for speckled trout. He said he had been out the previous day with another club member, and each had caught over 50 trout. My answer (of course) was “Let’s go!”

Jerry and I met right after lunchtime. It seems like the winter trout fishing here is better in the afternoon when the water has warmed up a little. We motored to a small bayou off of Pensacola bay, and began casting. Jerry had a red and yellow “super hair” Clouser minnow tied on. He told me it had done real well the previous day and offered me one. We fly tyers are a funny bunch (well at least me), and would rather fish with a fly we have tied ourselves, so I thanked Jerry for the offer and tied on another Clouser I had tied in



olive and white. Jerry immediately (as he so often does) began to catch trout. By the time he had caught his tenth I finally hooked my first, a nice 15” speck. Jerry asked if I wanted to reconsider and take him up on the red and yellow Clouser. I said no and tied on a Chartreuse and White Clouser. I had a hit right away and thought this might be the right fly. Jerry continued to catch fish after fish as I periodically had a hit. About the time he had his fly in the lip of the 30th trout, I decided to swallow my tyer’s pride and ask for a Red and Yellow Clouser. He handed me one in size 4, which I quickly tied on, and made a cast.

Wham! I had a hit. A short fight and release, another cast and again...Wham! This pattern continued until just before what proved to be a gorgeous sunset. We motored in at days end with Jerry being over the 50 mark and me at 30 trout. It was a great day of fishing and I was a believer!

As I went to buy some red and yellow super hair, I saw a new material called “Unique Hair”. Super hair is quite durable, but maybe a bit stiff. Bucktail is not as stiff but doesn’t stand up real well (I can sure tear one up with my hemostats removing a fly from a fish’s jaw). Unique Hair is kind of in the middle. It is a bit finer than super hair but every bit as durable. It is also easier to work with than the super hair, tying in much like bucktail does on a clouser. Unique hair and super hair are both available in a wide variety of colors to cover most any pattern combination we need. I think if you give it a try you will be very pleased with the results. Tying instructions for the Red and Yellow Unique Hair Clouser are on the next page.

Red and Yellow Unique Hair Clouser

Kevin Cohenour

HOOK	Mustad 34007 or equivalent, sizes 2 to 6
THREAD	Red 3/0 or size "G" thread
EYES	Dumbbells
BODY	Red and yellow "Unique Hair" (or substitute "super hair")
FLASH	Pearl krystal flash and silver or gold flashabou



1. Secure hook in vise and wrap thread to the 1/3 hook shank point. Not wrapping back far enough causes many tiers to crowd the eye and not get a nice cone shaped head.

2. Using 8-10 diagonal wraps each direction, secure the eyes at this point. Make 4-5 horizontal wraps around the base of the eyes to lock in. Place a small drop of super glue on bottom of wraps. This helps to better secure the eyes.



3. Cut a fat matchstick's diameter of yellow "unique hair" (for a size 2, less for smaller sizes). I pre-cut the butts. Secure immediately in front of the dumbbell eyes with 3 or 4 wraps. Wrap over the butts towards the hook eye and make a small cone. Wing length should extend at least a hook shank's length past the bend. Pull wing over the eyes and make 5-6 wraps immediately behind the eyes. Move thread to in front of eyes.



4. Secure 8-10 fibers of krystal flash on top of and slightly longer than the bucktail. Repeat with 8-10 strands of flashabou.



5. Cut a slightly fatter bunch of red "unique hair". Again I pre-cut the butt ends to make the red wing the same length as the yellow. Attach on top of flashabou. Wrap and make a neat, tapered head. Whip and cement. If desired, coat head and eyes with epoxy.