

## ***Poppers - Gurglers - Bangers - Crease Flies***

Springtime brings your favorite fish out of their wintertime lairs in the deep so you need to be ready with your favorite top water flies. Almost all of our local fish will take your popper and there is nothing more fun than to see a speck or blue or.....(pick your favorite) crash on it with all her might! Sometimes they miss on the way up and get it on the way down.

Closed-cell foam has changed the way we make our top water flies. Sure, deer hair, cork and balsa poppers work well but they take so long to build, tie and paint - and mine never turn out quite the way I would like. Long after your deer hair bug is water logged and retired for the day your foam popper will still be floating and popping. Foam can be manipulated into just about any shape so let your imagination rule! March tying at the bull session and clinic will be devoted to tying top water flies with foam - poppers, bangers, gurglers, divers, sliders and a new one on me, Blado's Crease Fly with Kevin Cohenour leading the way. Your club will provide materials. Here are some of the ones I like.



These are Gartside Gurglers from the fertile imagination of Jack Gartside, noted tyer and angler. Easy to cast and simple to tie, they have become my favorite top water fly. Bucktail, crystal flash, sheet foam and grizzly and red hackle are the ingredients. Gartside has a new one out that uses marabou for the tail and palmered marabou for the hackle. It really looks alive in the water.



Bob Popovics uses fairly soft foam cylinders for the heads of his "Bob's Bangers". A hot needle through the center makes way for the shank to slide in or out of the head. With heads and streamer flies tied separately, the angler interchange as he likes.



These are more traditional poppers with heads of harder foam epoxied to the hook shank. The top fly has crystal chenille for the body, the lower has hackle. The tails are bucktail and crystal flash. Painting is done with permanent markers. The eyes are decals. If the head of the bottom fly is reversed, the result is a slider.



These traditional poppers are all artificial and thus a bit more durable for our sharp-toothed friends. The tails are super hair which is not as buoyant as bucktail. The foam bodies provide plenty of flotation.

## Gartside Gurgler

This well known and much used fly floats on the surface and provides an enticing “gurgling” noise when retrieved. The Gartside Gurgler has proven itself successful against many freshwater and saltwater species.



Gartside Gurgler Materials List	
Hook	Sizes 2-8 Streamer Hook (Salt – 34007/11)
Thread	Uni Thread 6/0
Tail	Small amounts of 2 colors of buck tail
Tail Accent	4-6 strips Polar Flash or Flashabou
Body	2 or 3mm foam your choice of color ½” strip
Body Hackle	Opalescent Dubbing Rope
Indicator	Small Chip of foam in opposing color

1. Attach thread to hook starting  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the way down the shank. Cover the hook stopping at the bend.
2. Measure a small amount of your first color of buck tail one and a half times the length of the hook shank and attach using soft wraps that tighten as you go advancing the thread  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the way up the shank and trim the excess. Add additional wraps to secure the tail material.
3. Double over 3 to 4 strand of crystal flash/Flashabou around your thread, slide up to the hook, pull back toward the tail and secure with a few added wraps around the hook. Trim flash to  $\frac{1}{4}$ ” longer than the existing tail.
4. Measure a small amount of your second color of buck tail one and a half times the length of the hook shank and attach using soft wraps that tighten as you go advancing the thread  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the way up the shank and trim the excess. Add additional wraps to make sure the tail containing all 3 materials is secure.

5. Advance the thread back up to the beginning of the hook stopping about a hook eye's length behind the eye.
6. Cut a piece of 2mm foam into a ½" strip 2 times the length of the open hook shank and taper one end slightly to ease securing it to the hook shank.
7. Fold the tapered end of foam onto the top of the hook shank starting about an eye's length behind the hook eye. While pinching the foam onto the hook shank use increasingly tighter wraps to secure the foam all the way down to the start of the tail. Make sure the foam is wrapped and re-wrapped to tighten it onto the hook shank.
8. To cover the base layer of foam, secure a piece of opalescent rope and advance the thread back to the beginning of the hook shank. Wrap up the hook shank stoking the fibers back after each wrap toward the back of the hook until you reach the beginning of the foam. Secure the opalescent rope and add a few half hitches.
9. Double over the foam and secure it to the hook shank just in front of the opalescent but before the hook eye using increasingly tighter wraps.
10. Build a thread dam by adding a number of wraps in front of the foam behind the eye and secure with a whip finish or half hitches.
11. If desired, you can now add a small foam indicator to the foam crease and secure with added wraps and a whip finish or half hitches.
12. Trim the foam to a half circle overlapping the eye. That design is meant to create a wake and popping as the fly is stripped in.

The Gartside Gurgler is retrieved using strips of varying speed and length. The goal is to leave a wake and popping sound on the water which, we think, may imitate injured baitfish. Consider as well adding a clouser minnow off the hook shank on a 12" or so dropper. Fish become curious by the commotion of the gurgler and cruise over to take a look. It is often hard for them to resist that clouser hanging below. In particular, specs love this set-up on early morning grass flats.

## *Feather Tail Gurgler .... Based on the Original Recipe by Jack Gartside*

**HOOK** Mustad 34007, size to suit prey  
**THREAD** Red 3/0 or flat waxed mono  
**TAIL** 4 or 6 hackles, concave side out, crystal flash  
**BODY** Ice chenille over 3 mm foam  
**THROAT** 2 wraps of red hackle  
**BACK/LIP** 3 mm foam (second layer optional)



1. Place de-barbed hook in vise. Lay thread base from eye to bend. Select 2 or 3 pairs of hackle. Cut and trim so they are equal in length and about 1 1/2 times the length of hook. All feathers can be tied in at once using the pinch method or you may choose to tie half the feathers on one side first and the second half in the next step. You may even choose to tie the feathers in one at a time. Tie in so feathers bow outward. Top tail with 10 or so strands of crystal flash.



2. Cut a section of 3mm foam two hooks long and the width of the hook gape. Trim one end of the foam into the form of a stake. Tie in the sharpened end just behind the hook eye and then wrap the thread over the foam in 6 or 7 equally spaced turns back to the bend.



3. Tie in a length of ice chenille at the bend. Wrap the thread forward over the foam in the tracks of the previous thread wraps stopping an eye length behind the eye. Then wrap the ice chenille forward in the thread tracks, tie in and trim excess. Tie in a red hackle, wrap two turns to simulate gills, secure and trim excess.



4. Bring the foam forward and tie in just behind the hook eye with several firm wraps. Cut a second piece of foam and tie in directly over the first. Whip finish over the tie-in point and then lift the foam and whip finish again just behind the hook eye. Coat all thread wraps liberally with head cement

## The Mega Popper by Matt Wegener

Many years ago I was given a giant (3/0) Bob's Banger popper. It was the first time I'd ever laid hands on such a big fly! That big white popper has fooled 90% of my Jack Crevalle I've caught, along with countless Bull Redfish. It's still my go bait when the big boys come to town. But, last summer I ran into a situation with club member Brian Whalen, where that big popper just wasn't enough to get the attention of hungry Jacks that were cuing on bigger mullet. That day spawned the mega popper. Yes, it's huge. But it casts surprisingly well for such a big fly, as long as you are using a 10-12 wt rod, which is standard fare for me when targeting big predators like Jacks and Bull Redfish.



**Hook:** Saltwater Popper, 3/0, 2X heavy, 4 XL

**Thread:** Any color of strong thread

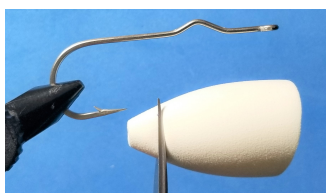
**Popper:** Rainy's Preshaped Saltwater Popper, size Large

**Anti-foul loop:** 40# mono

**Adhesive:** Zap-a-Gap Goo

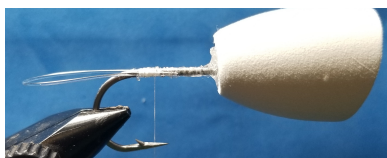
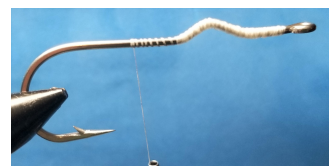
**Body:** Estaz Grande (white) & EP Anadromous Brush (raspberry)

**Tail:** Steve Farrar Flash Blend (white)



1. Trim 1/4" from the rear of the popper body

2. Lay a big thread base on the front half of the hook shank. This will help absorb the glue to hold the popper in place.



3. Apply glue and slide the popper head on the body. Tie in anti-fouling loop on the hook bend.

4. Tie in a 3-4" tail.



5. Wrap estaz for the back half of the body.

6. Wrap in the brush to form the front half of the body.



7. Trim brush, whip finish, and add eyes & gills with a red marker. Apply a thin layer of epoxy or clear goo to protect the fly (optional).

## *Crease Fly... Kevin Cohenour*

Hook	Long shank stainless, size 1/0 to 6
Thread	3/0 to match foam color
Tail	Bucktail or saddle hackle/bucktail
Flash	Krystal flash or flashabou on top tail
Body	Sticky back foam with nylon or mylar laminated
Eyes	Stick on tape eyes
Glue	Gel super glue and 5 minute epoxy

1. Tape nylon material or mylar sheet (nylon dress fabric works great, and is available in many colors) to table top with scotch tape. Peel protective paper from sticky back foam. Carefully laminate foam to material. You only get one chance so be careful!

2. Cut into rectangles, lengths equal to shank length, width about  $\frac{3}{4}$  shank length. Secure hook in vise and wind thread to bend.



3. Attach tail of bucktail equal to shank length. You may use a tail of saddle hackle on top of bucktail (like on a deceiver) instead. Attach 10 to 12 strands of flash on top tail extending slightly longer. Coarsely wrap thread forward to eye (gives super glue a foundation to grab) and whip finish. Cut thread.



4. Fold foam in half the long way. Cut as pictured on bottom, tail and front.



5. Apply superglue to hook shank. Fold foam over long ways and glue to shank. Trim bottom flat to open gape.



6. Attach eyes and color gills and body. Coat lightly with epoxy over entire foam body and eyes.