

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

Sculpin Helmet Bunny Sculpin

With the fall streamer season approaching, here is a new twist on an old favorite. Big trout and smallmouth love to ambush a careless sculpin, and this one is about the easiest sculpin pattern I have found. Sculpins live among the rocks on the stream bottom, and are typically the same color as the stream bottom with a pearly belly. They are not particularly strong swimmers so they stay pretty close to home. The Sculpin Helmet is the right weight and shape to dives to the bottom and stay there while the bunny strip undulates in the current like a real baitfish.



Hook: Dai-Riki 810 Size2 or 4

Thread: 6/0 Brown

Underbody: Pearl Petit Estaz Chenille

Wing: Barred Magnum Rabbit Strip Olive/Brown

Pectoral Fins: Olive/Black Grizzly Marabou

Head: Small Fish Skull Sculpin Helmet (Hint... there are directions right on the package)

Estimate how long you want your bunny strip to be, and poke the hook through the center of the strip at that point. Leave both ends hang and secure hook in vise as you normally would.

- 1) Start thread about 3/8" behind hook eye and advance to hook bend.
- 2) Tie in Estaz Chenille at hook bend and advance thread to original starting point.
- 3) Wrap Estaz Chenille body to waiting thread. Tie off and trim excess.
- 4) Invert hook in vise. Pull bunny strip over the hook shank to the thread base 3/8" behind the eye.
- 5) Using several wraps of thread, secure the bunny strip and trim excess.
- 6) Tie in one or two grizzly marabou feathers on each side of the hook at this same point extending out to the side forming pectoral fins.
- 7) Trim excess material.
- 8) Form a neatly tapered head well behind the hook eye. Whip finish and trim thread.

Test-fit your sculpin helmet before actually applying it. Use several drops of Zap-A-Gap to secure helmet to hook with hook eye exposed. If you want it even more secure, make several wraps of between the hook eye and the head, and Zap-A-Gap again. Stick eyes on and you're done.

The Sculpin Helmets are available in small or large sizes, and brown or olive colors at your favorite fly tying retailer. I like them in both brown and olive, but orange and black also seem to be popular. Depending on water depth, fish them on a floating line and long leader, or on a short leader with a sink-tip line... whatever it takes to keep the fly near or on the bottom. I like to use a loop knot when pitching streamers for better action.