

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

Chubby Chernobyl

So we're planning a trip out west this fall, and while we love patronizing the local fly shops, we (mostly I) also like to be prepared – including a good supply of flies. When asking around about what to tie, everyone says we gotta have a bunch Chubby Chernobyls. Supposedly it looks like a stonefly, a salmon fly, a hopper, or a gigantic caddis. Mostly, though, it is a combination attractor and strike indicator. When I ask what color, the answer is almost always purple. You can find them in a rainbow of colors, but always carry purple. 'Why?' You ask; because that's what all the guides throw, and they catch fish. These are not technically-difficult patterns to tie, nor are they the least bit delicate to tie or to throw. They are designed to float like a cork, (so I do consider them a dry fly for those of you out there counting) and will do a great job of holding up a jumbo stonefly nymph or two.



Hook: Dai-Riki 730 or 280 (my favorite) Size #8-12
Thread: 6/0 Color to match body (Purple)
Tail: Pearl Crystal Flash
Underbody: Thin Foam
Body: SLF Dubbing or similar – I like the Super Bright brand for this
Back: Black 2mm foam
Legs: Sili-Legs black or similar
Wings: White Poly Wing

- 1) Secure hook in vise and start thread behind hook eye. Advance thread to hook bend.
- 2) Tie in 6-8 strands of crystal flash as a tail and trim to about half the hook shank length.
- 3) Cut a one-eighth inch wide strip of thin foam (any color – you will cover it up with dubbing) and taper at one end. Tie in the foam strip just in front of tail material and advance thread to behind hook eye.
- 4) Wrap an even body of the thin foam to form a uniform underbody (that floats too), and tie off behind hook eye.
- 5) Using a generous amount of dubbing, dub a body rearward completely covering the underbody all the way to the tail and then back to about the hook point.
- 6) Either using a foam cutter or just scissors, cut a foam body about twice the diameter of the body and rounded at the rear.
- 7) Tie foam strip on top of the dubbed body with the rounded rear end extending out the back about equal to the hook gap. Use several wraps being careful not to cut the foam. Resist the temptation to glue. It affects the buoyancy.
- 8) Tie in Sili-Legs on both sides in the gap between the body and the foam. They should be about one inch out both front and back forming an X.
- 9) Right on top of the foam, tie in about a 2" piece of the poly yarn at its middle.'
- 10) Using more dubbing, pull both parts of the wing to the rear and dub over this joint to help secure the wing, splay the legs appropriately, and fill in the thread gap.
- 11) Pull the front part of the foam and all the legs rearward, and dub more body to about the ¾ point on the hook. Secure the foam down again at this point and repeat the legs and wing procedure.
- 12) Once completed, lift the foam and dub the small gap behind the eye and whip-finish.

13) Pull the legs together and trim to the same length. Comb out the wings to make them fluffy, pull rearward, and trim even with the end of the foam body.

Fish just like any hopper (or strike indicator) but don't be afraid to move the fly occasionally. Feel free to try other color combinations as well. Dubbing, foam, and leg material all come in a rainbow of colors – in addition to purple of course.