

**Fly of the Month**

*by Cliff Parmer*

**Foam Hopper**

The origin of this pattern is Toby Vaughn's E-Z Hopper, which may be seen at [www.flyangleronline.com](http://www.flyangleronline.com). Like most tyers I've added a couple of my own refinements. I use this fly for panfish and bass on streams and lakes and tie it primarily on size 6 and 10 hooks to avoid the hassle of removing sardine-sized fish. You may tie this fly in pretty much any color that draws a reaction; yellow with bright red or pink legs or black with yellow legs has been suggested and there's always green with green legs. My own experience has been best with plain old brown.



Here are the components:

Hook: 3XL standard weight (Any 3XL hook will work due to the floatation).

Thread: Tan Unithread 6/0, or color to match foam.

Body Extension/Underbody: 2mm craft foam, color of choice.

Body: Medium chenille, color to match foam (Brown or goldenrod yellow for brown foam).

Hackle: Saddle or hen hackle, color to match body.

Overawing: Deer hair, color of choice (Brown or black seems to work well for brown hoppers).

Legs: One stand of medium rubber legs on each side of the body. (The original recipe uses color to provide sharp contrast to body. I use darkbrown for a brown hopper.

- 1) Cut a strip of foam about the width of the hook gap or slightly wider. I find 1/4" works well for #10 hooks and 5/16" for #6. Cut the strip into pieces about 1- 3/4 times the hook shank length and trim one end to provide a tapered end of the abdomen.
- 2) Starting at the hook eye, lay a base layer of thread back to just before the hook bend. Lay the foam strip on top of the hook with the tapered end extending about 1/2 the hook shank length. Bend the foam over the shank and tie in with 3 or 4 soft wraps to start followed by firm wraps back to about
- 3) (The original recipe palmers the hackle for the full length of the body; however, I prefer to tie this fly thorax style and so will use that approach in the following steps.) Lay the end of the chenille on top of the hook shank and bind it in with thread wraps back to the hook bend. Wrap the chenille to slightly behind the halfway point of the shank and tie in the hackle by the tip with shiny side facing toward the eye so the fibers point to the rear when palmered. Wrap the thread forward to about 1 eye length behind the eye, then wrap the chenille forward, tie it in and clip the end. Palmer the hackle forward and tie in as well. Make 3 or 4 turns of hackle. Trim the top of the hackle off.
- 4) Cut a bunch of deer hair about the diameter of a pencil, clean it and even up the tips. Tie the deer hair on top of the body using soft wraps to start and make a few wraps back toward the hook bend. The idea is to keep the hair together as much as possible in this step rather than flare it. The tops of the hair should extend slightly behind the foam strip. After tying in the hair, clip the butts and apply head cement to help hold the hair in place. Wrap the thread back toward the hook bend slightly less than the width of the hook gap.

- 5) Fold the foam back over the hook shank and bind it in place with a few wraps of thread. Trim the foam to about 1/8 to 3/16-inch behind the wraps.
- 6) Lay one strand of leg on the side of the body below the folded-back foam head and make a couple of wraps then do the same with the leg on the other side. Make a couple of whip finish wraps, apply head cement and you're ready to fish.
- 7) This fly can be set down with either a solid thwack or settled gently on the surface, depending upon your casting skill and style. Once the chenille gets wet it will settle down into the film so it looks lifelike. Give it lots of jiggles and have fun.