

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

Ray Schmidt's Rattlesnake

I first met Ray Schmidt when he spoke at one of our meetings some 10 years ago. That was where our Michigan fly fishing started – at Schmidt Outfitters on the Manistee River. Since then, he has sold the operation and moved on to other things, but one of his lasting legacies is this spiffy little streamer. It is getting into streamer season, but I've never been into slinging big, articulated, multi-dimensional, wet-sock casting streamer all day for "a follow". However, I do like throwing the occasional 5-6 weight sized streamers catching the more aggressive fish when nothing else will. Ray's Rattlesnake is just that kind of bug.



Rear Hook: Dai-Riki 135 #10
Main Hook: TMC 2499 SP-BL #6
Mono: 20#
Beads: Silver and Gold Plastic or Brass depending on desired weight
Wing: Magnum Rabbit Strip – Natural, Olive, etc.
Flash: Pearl and Gold Crystal Flash
Collar/Head: Natural Deer Hair

- 1) Secure rear hook in vise. Using 6 inches of the 20# mono, make a snell knot and pass the tag end back through the hook eye leaving both ends out the eye of the hook. Remove from vise.
- 2) Secure main hook in vise and start thread behind hook eye and advance thread to hook bend. Thread 6 beads onto both pieces of mono, and secure to main hook shank using thread wraps and Zap-A-Gap. Make sure hook point rides up. Return thread to hook bend.
- 3) Trim the end of the rabbit strip to a point and tie in at hook bend. Trim to length so that it ends just beyond the bend of the rear hook. Tie in flash over the top of the rabbit strip wing and trim to the same length as the wing.
- 4) Cut and stack a thick bunch of deer hair. Tie in just in front of the wing and make sure it spins all the way around the hook shank to form a collar. Use the butts as part of the head. Spin and pack another section of deer hair in front of that forming a head to just behind the hook eye. Whip-finish and trim thread. Using hair scissors and a razor blade, trim the head to a slightly flattened bullet shape.

I actually fished this fly again with Brian Kozminski of True North Trout in early October with great success. Fished on a floating line 6 weight, we threw one tied with brass beads up against the bank, any in-river structure, or through any other fish structure. Vary your action between short erratic strips and slow smooth strips. The deer hair head and center-weighted beads make for a very fishy action.