

# Andy Meadows' Lowcountry Redfish Crab

Prepared by **Peter Lami**

March 2, 2021 v3.1

It's not often in the history of fly fishing that a pattern is named after it's original innovator but there are a few examples: Del Brown's Merkin pattern, Lefty Kreh's Deceiver pattern and of course Bob Clouser's famous Clouser pattern. We are fortunate to have in our ranks at Sea Island Fly Fishers Club a fly tier who we can best honor by forever linking his name to this *Lowcountry Redfish Crab* pattern.



**A**ndy Meadows developed this all-seasons crab pattern for Lowcountry Winter Redfish. *Ossabaw Island Heritage Preserve* in Georgia is Andy's home waters. He is the senior Georgia DNR Wildlife Manager on the island and has been in his stewardship since 2003. This impressionistic Redfish pattern imitates mud minnows, shrimp and blue crabs. You can throw this fly into the short grass at high tide and never get hung up because of the unique weed guard. The hook setting power of this *Size 2* hook is guaranteed to work. This fly is highly recommended during the Winter Redfish season.

## MATERIALS LIST *(\* denotes favorite, \*\* no substitution)*

- Veevus G.S.P. 100 Denier Thread — Color: Black
- The Fly Shop Hook Model TFS 7423\*\*, Size 2\*\*, 3X long, tin, slightly down turned eye
- Orvis Barred 1/8" Rabbit Zonkers\* — Winter Color: Ginger / Brown\*
- Hareline Barred 1/8" Rabbit Fur Strips — Winter Color: Olive bar / Flesh (*equivalent substitution*)
- Hareline Ripple Ice Fiber or equivalent Ice Dub — Winter Color: Copper
- Wapsi Palmer Chenille, Med Pearl CPL2253
- Hareline Coastal Blacktail Deer Body Hair — Winter Color: Medium
- EP Fibers 3-D\* — Summer Colors: Backcountry\* or Mullet
- Enrico Puglisi Finger Brush, or very small pet hair brush
- Pearlescent Mylar Tubing from The Fly Shop, Size Small — Winter Color: Pearl
- Hareline Brass Black Eyes — Size: Medium
- Hareline Chicone's Crusher Legs\* — Winter Color: Olive Bar/Clear\* or, Brown/Clear
- 40 Lb. (max) RioMax Plus Tippet, or any suitable hard mono that isn't too stiff to bend
- Zap-A-Gap (Medium CA Plus), aka Super Glue, or Hard as Hull head cement
- COPIC Sketch Marker, Black or Brown

The Summer version of the pattern is identical but tied in darker color combinations, ex. Black/Purple.

## Online Resources

**J. Stockard Fly Fishing**  
<https://www.jsflyfishing.com>

**The Fly Shop**  
<https://www.theflyshop.com>

**Orvis**  
[www.orvis.com/fly-tying](http://www.orvis.com/fly-tying)

## TYING INSTRUCTIONS

### Rabbit Tail

1. Start with a Model TFS 7423, Size #2 hook from The Fly Shop. Run the GSP thread down the bend of the hook. The gel spun polyester thread filaments need to be spun counter-clockwise on the bobbin frequently. It can also be helpful to apply dubbing wax to the thread to get started because it tends to slip on the metal hook shank.
2. Tie Rabbit Zonker in upside down at the hook's point. The length should be measured with a ruler 1-¼ Inches (max). Post up in the back to prevent fouling. Apply maximum pressure with thread to compress and flatten the raw hide.
3. Tie in a pinch of Ripple Ice, or equivalent flashy synthetic material, sparingly—6 strands (max)
4. 1-½ Turns of Palmer Chenille.
5. Stack a small amount of deer hair, about the diameter of a pencil, on top of hook shank with loose thread turns, then spin 360° with your fingers. Once completed, lock in the deer hair with a couple of tight thread turns being careful not to cut deer hair with GPS thread. The relatively stiff deer hair will prevent the rabbit tail from fouling around the hook when making presentation cast to Redfish.
6. Secure a small amount, just a pinch, of Kingfisher Blue Arctic Fox Fur on top of the rabbit hide. This imitates a blue crab, or maybe it is just appeals to my artistic sensibilities. This step is optional, you be the judge.

*\*\*\* All materials above must be tied closely together and not too bulky. \*\*\**

*\*\*\* It is IMPORTANT to start the next steps exactly at the hook point, barb is even better. \*\*\**

*\*\*\* I have never had the Zonker Rabbit tail foul around the hook using deer hair in Step #5. \*\*\**

### Crab Body & Eyes

1. The Crab Body has five segments—a 3:2 ratio of EP 3D Fibers to Mylar Tubing. The EP 3-D Fibers are very difficult to handle. To make this step more manageable, dip fibers in water beforehand. Precut all five 1-½ inch long clumps of 3-D Fibers and Tubing tie-in on top of fly. Use exactly two 'X' thread wraps one way, then two more 'X' wraps the other way, to secure synthetic material in place. Tip! Dip 3D-fibers in water for easier handling, then use a wooden clothespin to keep each subsequent segment out of the way.
2. Pre-cut two pieces of Mylar Tubing 1-½ inches long, remove the core. Next, take a black permanent marker pen to draw a pattern on the tubing, then roll excess ink off by rolling on a paper towel. This step is pure genius because it creates a very special prismatic, rainbow finish on the Mylar Tubing. Tie in 1-½ inches of Mylar Tubing.
3. Complete crab body by repeating Step #6, then repeat Step # 7, and finally repeat Step #6 again.
4. Remove fly from tying vice and trim crab body sections with scissors.
5. Secure Black Brass Eyes using cross and underbelly wraps.
6. Zap-A-Gap (Medium CA Plus) for metal eyes. Use sparingly, avoid getting on fingers! Alternatively, cover head with Loon UV Clear Fly Finish Thick. Zap with UV flashlight.

## Legs & Weed Guard

1. Put the fly back into vice with the hook Upside Down.
2. Tie in 4 Rubber Legs — 2 ½ Inches long. (min.)
3. Tie in hard mono loop-style Weed Guard on the straight shank of hook, not at the 60° bend at the downturned eye of the hook. Press the Weed Guard downward and adjust loop size so that it is merely 1-2<sub>mm</sub> away from the hook point before locking in with final thread wraps. Remember, you are going to be casting this fly into the short grass at high tide, so we're talking about almost the width of a piece of paper.
4. Apply Medium CA+ super glue to weed guard.
5. Blue crabs are abundant in the Lowcountry, so I like to finish the fly with Blue Danville's Flat Waxed Nylon thread starting in front of the Eyes to hook eye to give the fly a certain signature look. Again, this thread color choice is optional, you be the judge.
6. Apply Hard as Hull head cement.

*\*\*\* Yes it's true, Andy Meadow's technique is difficult to learn how to tie, but it never gets hung up in the marsh grass where the Redfish can be found at high tide and works equally as well in 3-4 feet of water over a dark mud flat in the Winter. There isn't a better weedless Lowcountry Redfish fly pattern on YouTube! \*\*\**