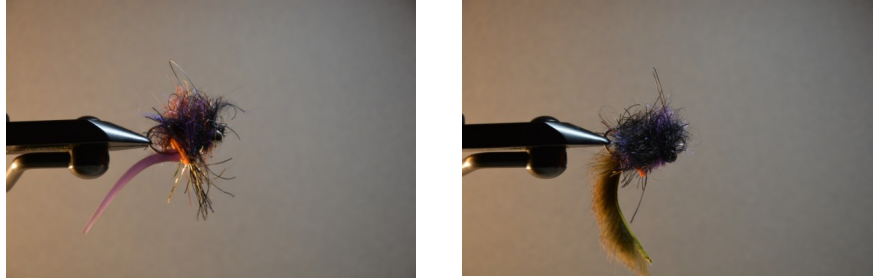


John's Thang

A Lowcountry Crab Pattern

By John Mathews

Two Versions



Tying Instructions and Recipe for both ways to tie this pattern.

- Hook: Mustad Classic O'shaughnessy size 1 to 2/0 or other large eyed, wide gap hook
- Weed Guard: Nickel Titanium "Knot so Kinky" leader wire, 18# test or 20# test
- Eyes: Medium to Large Lead Dumbbell
- Body: Fly Tyers Dungeon (FTD) Kraken Enhanced Dubbing(s) blend to your preference.
- Flash: FTD Starburst Dubbing-Gold,Copper,Purple,Red
- Tail: Tentacle from Squishy toy or Zonker Strip
- Egg Sack: Thin slice of Foam Fly body, colored orange.

NOTE: The top and bottom orientation of the hook in the vise switches after step 11. This fly fishes point up. These instructions cover using the Squishy Toy Tentacles for the tail of the fly. However, the tail could be made from a host of materials such as, Rabbit Fur Strips, Chenille, Marabou, Hackle, EP type fibers.

1. Place hook in the vise with the point down.
2. Wrap the thread in front of hook eye and make 6-8 wraps against the hook eye then wrap back on the hook shank about 1/3 the way toward the hook point.
3. Cut a 3 1/2" long piece of Nickel Titanium leader wire and insert one end of the wire through the hook eye from the bottom of the hook to about 1/3 of the distance along the hook shank. Secure the end of the wire with a few wraps.
4. Insert other end of wire through the hook eye in the same manner and secure it with a few wraps.

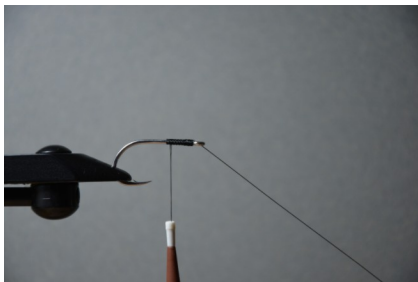


Figure 1: Step #3

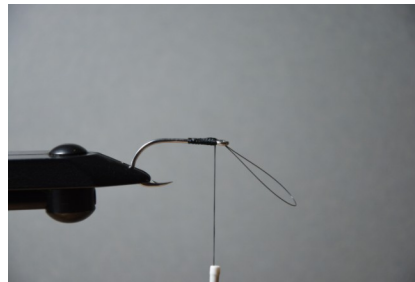


Figure 2: Step #4

5. Wrap thread to a point just behind the hook eye.

6. Fold wire back to be sure the apex of the wire loop you created folds behind the bend of the hook. If the apex of the loop strikes the hook at or near the point or barb, you have created a “Bite Guard”, not a weed guard. If this is the case, unwrap the wire and adjust length to make the wire loop extend past the bend of the hook.
7. Once the weedguard length is correct pull or fold the weedguard back once again and make 4-5 thread wraps between the eye of the hook and the base of the wire loop. Release the wire. It should be close to a right angle to the hook. Adjust hook wraps in front of or behind the wire to adjust angle of wire in relation to the hook.

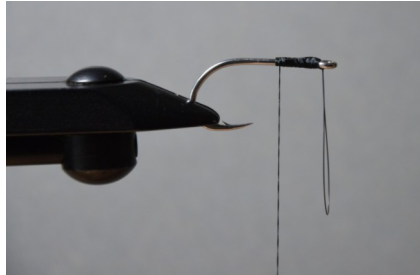


Figure 3: Weed Guard Completed

8. Tie in dumbbell eyes close to the eye of the hook leaving just enough room to make a few final securing wraps. No material will be tied in between the eyes and the hook eye.



Figure 4: Step #8 and #9 completed

9. Move thread to just in front of the hook point.
10. Tie in metallic hackle and make 3 tightly spaced wraps and secure the hackle.
11. Flip the hook in the vise. This fly fishes point up.

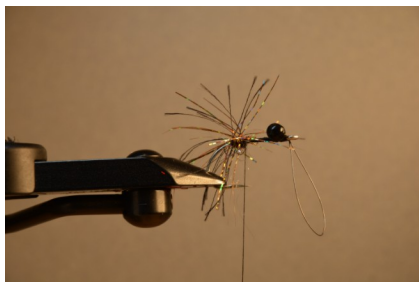


Figure 5: Metallic hackle applied

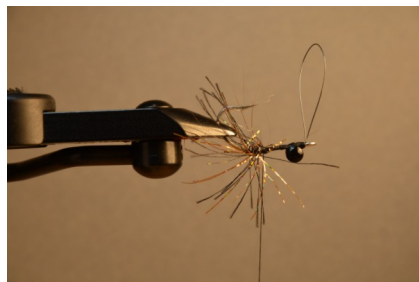


Figure 6: Invert the hook

12. Place thread, in front of the hackle at $\frac{1}{4}$ way from the hackle and lead eyes.
13. At this point, place the mid point of one of the prepared bundles of Kraken dubbing on the near side of the hook while favoring what is now the top side of the hook.
14. Make three wraps to secure the dubbing bundle in place.
- 15 Place another bundle on the opposite side of the hook from the first bundle in the same manner take 3 wraps to secure the bundle.



Figure 7: First bundles secured

16 # SPECIAL NOTE: For the following step try to maintain the **V** in each bundle of dubbing that has been created by the previous 3 thread wraps. Now-Adjust the two bundles so they are secured to the hook in the middle of the bundle, with a bundle on each side of the hook, and just slightly on top of the hook.

17. With step 16 completed, now take 5-6 tight wraps in the **V** to secure the dubbing bundles to the hook shank making sure they stay in position. Now finish securing with with a half hitch.

18 Brush the bundles back, move the thread to just in front of the bundles and make 5-6 wraps tight to the dubbing bundles. Secure with a half hitch.

19. Now move thread to a position halfway between the first dubbing bundles and the lead eyes.

20. Repeat steps 13-17



Figure 8: Second bundles secured

21. With step 20 completed, move the thread to between the lead eyes and the weedguard. Make 5-6 wraps tight to the base of the weedguard wraps and whip finish or apply several half hitches. Apply head cement if you like.

22. Now, using the cap from a Fine Point marker as a guide, use it like a cookie cutter and cut out a round disk from a sheet of orange craft foam. Pierce the orange foam disk through its center with the hook point and push the disk up against the metallic hackle.



Figure 9: Orange foam disk added

23. Cut a tentacle from a squishy toy and thread it on the hook in a manner similar to threading a twist tail grub on a lead head.



Figure 10: Squishy toy with tentacles

The material used in the Squishy Toys is somewhat different than the material used to make a twist tail grub. With a grub, the hook point would easily penetrate the grub enabling you to thread the grub on to the hook. Not so with the toy tentacle. The toy tentacle resists penetration by the hook point. The hook point will disappear into the tentacle but not penetrate it. At the point the barb of the hook seems to be in the tentacle, turn the hook 90 degrees to the tentacle and force the point through the wall of the tentacle. Now thread the tentacle on the hook and up against the orange foam disk. The tentacles do not need to be glued or thread wrapped as they do not slip on the hook.

24. Leave the fly in the vise or remove it, your choice, and comb or brush the dubbing to each side of the fly. Trim the dubbing to a more crab like shape and trim what is the bottom of the crab flush to the hook.



Figure 11: Completed fly

Developer's Notes: I developed this fly after reading an article about a fly called a Wee Wiggler that used the squishy toy tentacles as a tail and hackle as a body. This fly is that fly on steroids and modified for reds and a tidal marsh fishery. It is designed to imitate the many fiddler crabs that are the main food source of red fish feeding on the flood tides in the marshes of the Lowcountry. Fishing a flooded tidal marsh it is just like fishing in a over grown flooded cow pasture. You are casting to fish in 6" to 3' tall weeds of several varieties . **A weed guard is absolutely essential.** The Nickel Titanium wire tied as a weed guard, in this manner, has proven to be the best weed guard that I have yet to find. I have waded for several miles with my fly dragging behind me and never had it hang up in the marsh grasses and weeds. This fly can be tied using zonker strips for the tail but the tying process is just slightly different.

John's Thang

Tying instruction and recipe

Substituting zonker strip for the squishy toy tentacle

Materials are the same with the exception of zonker strips in place of the Squishy Toy tentacle.



Figure 1: Rabbit zonker strip version

1. Place hook in vise.
2. Punch out the orange foam disk.
- 3 Pierce center of foam disk and slide the disk all the way forward on the hook to the eye of the hook.
4. Thread wrap hook shank from behind the disk to just over the barb.
5. Tie in 1 1/2" piece of Rabbit(Zonker Strip) fur side down. Wrap threda enough times to create a good bump. Secure thread and cut it.
6. Slide the faom disk back to the Zonker strip tie in point.

NOW:

Pick the tying process at step # 2 through step # 21. At step 9 the thread should be just in front of the foam disk. This is the tie in point for the metallic hackle.

Trim the fly being careful not to cut cut the Zonker strip off.

Fly is now complete.