

Tying the Bill Miller Crawfish Pattern

Submitted by Jerry Snider



An amazing crawfish pattern for smallmouth bass. Also fishes well for largemouth and brown trout. For stream fishing, fish dead drift as if crawdad has been dislodged from the bottom. In ponds and lakes, fish along shore bottom.

Unlike many crawdad patterns, this one truly rides hook-point-up in the water.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: moderately difficult

LIST OF MATERIALS:

Hook— Dai-Riki 700B, sizes 4-6 for bass, size 8 for trout.

Thread—Tan monocord.

Lead wire—.020”-.035” dia.

Antennae— Pheasant tail fibers.

Carapace— Swiss straw, tan or brown.

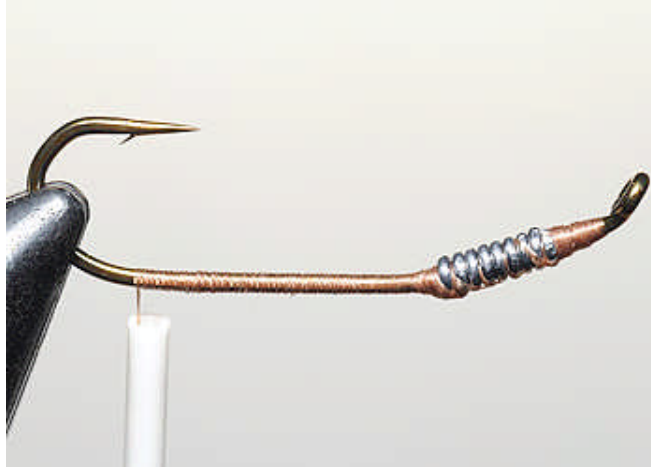
Body— Aunt Lydia’s sparkle yarn, tan.

Pincers— natural buck tail.

Legs— barred ginger or dyed grizzly hackle.

Rib— fine copper wire.

TYING INSTRUCTIONS:



1. Insert hook in vise, hook point up, wrap 8-10 wraps of lead on the bent segment of hook shank below hook eye. Attach thread behind hook eye and wrap thread dams at each end of lead wraps. Continue thread along hook shank to just below hook barb. Apply thin coat of head cement over lead wraps.



2. Select two pheasant tail fibers and tie in below hook barb. When tied in, the fiber antennae should be length of hook shank.



3. Select a 4" strip of tan Swiss Straw. Push the hook point through the lower portion of the straw and tie base of straw on hook shank.



4. Reverse hook in vise, hook point down, and tie in a 6-8" length of tan sparkle yarn on top of the hook above hook point.



5. Reverse hook in vise, hook point up. Twist the upper inch or so of sparkle yarn clockwise to tighten up yarn. Do not let yarn untwist.



6. Make two packed turns of tightly twisted yarn below hook point, and a third turn immediately on top of and between the previous two turns. Tie off firmly, leaving a ball or sphere of yarn forming the head of the fly. Let the remainder of yarn relax.



7. Select a barred ginger or dyed grizzly hackle one size smaller than hook size used. Spread fibers out from hackle stem and tie in, tip first, behind the yarn head.



8. Select a small clump of natural buck tail and tie in behind yarn head to form pincers. The pincers should be ca. $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the hook shank after tying in.



9. Divide the buck tail into two equal halves and separate with tying thread. Make a couple of wraps around the base of each half to give better separation. Apply coat of head cement over wraps.



10. Trim off excess buck tail and (optional) cauterize the cut ends.



11. Untwist the yarn strands slightly and wrap fly body. Tie off yarn at start of bent segment of hook shank.



12. Palmer wrap hackle along body to form legs. Tie off hackle at base of bent segment of hook shank. Clip excess hackle.



13. Pull Swiss Straw forward off of hook point. Stretch firmly over fly body and tie down tightly at bent segment of hook shank.



14. Pull up and back on loose end of Swiss Straw to expose bent segment of hook shank below hook eye. Untwist the three strands of sparkle yarn and cut off one strand, leaving two strands to wrap lower abdomen. Tie in ca. 3 ½" of fine copper wire just below hook eye and wrap with thread to beginning of bent section of hook shank.



15. Wrap two remaining strands of sparkle yarn to behind hook eye, tie down and clip off excess yarn.



16. Pull Swiss Straw firmly over rear portion of abdomen and wrap 4-6 turns of copper wire to rib abdomen. Use a whip finish to tie off copper wire with tying thread at hook eye and underneath excess Swiss Straw. Trim excess Swiss Straw, leaving ca. ½" or so. Spread out and trim to form the tail fan.