

Fly Lines

Bush Pig

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The bush pig first exploded into prominence in 2004 with a wave of great captures and a burst of chatter on internet swoffing forums. Essentially a collaboration of minds from Sydney fly fisher Lionel Kemp and DNA manufacturer Earl Hamilton, I recently spoke to Lionel to find out a little more about it. Initially the bush pig was conceived to emulate the Fat Albert, through clever design and a simple tying process this goal was met comfortably and the pig has now become a stand out fly in it's own right.

Something I found fascinating from my discussion with Lionel was that this fly works better with slightly less flash in southern waters and some extra flash in the north of the country where big tides can make for dirty water, meaning a flashier fly is needed to cut through the water a little better. Lionel cites an olive over white bush pig as his favourite universal colour and enjoys nothing more than walking the dog with it for those renowned Sydney Harbour Kingfish. He also suggested sinking it into schools of larger bait to dredge up tuna and other pelagic species.

For a few more clues on hooking up with the pig I also talked to Tully fly angler Roly Newton, he's been whacking the local lutjanids with this fly, using a couple of his favourite colours – black over red and the herring colour pattern in the tying

sequence. Simply letting the fly drift and sink into snags and then twitching it back out has seen him coming up solid on plenty of mangrove jack and fingermark. He also likes it on the flats for queenfish, trevally and of course, barramundi.

So, what makes the bush pig such a great fly? Well it offers up a far more realistic profile than many of it's predecessors, with a bulky front end that creates plenty of turbulence through the water, allowing the tail a true to life swimming action, while still holding it's shape perfectly. This is also a key factor in dirty water where fish pick up on those subtle movements and vibrations well before they see the fly. The bush pig also lends itself to matching the hatch, with a tying process that is entirely malleable it becomes possible to match any baitfish with clever tying. Profile can be changed up by altering the length and amount of the fibres through the tying process or by varying the way you array the materials around the hook, so that you may achieve a fatter, mullet type shape or a slimmer shape, such as a herring or bony bream.

The other feature I like to try and match is flash distribution. Look at any baitfish and invariably it will have very reflective flanks, a dark shiny back and a bright belly, by finessing the placement and type of flash you use it's possible to match all of these things closely. Lets tie some up.



MATERIALS

- Hook:** Gamakatsu SL12S 4/0
Thread: Flat wax nylon and monofilament
Body: Tiewell Ghost Fibre and DNA Hologfusion
Eyes: Spirit River 5.0 3D eyes
Epoxy: Devcon 5 minute epoxy

TYING INSTRUCTIONS

PICTURE 1: Step 1

Take an amount of silver belly Ghost Fibre about the thickness of a pencil and cut it down to 16 cm in length. While this sounds a little exacting, tying in the measurements given here will give you a great taper and a good base from which to experiment. Taper the fibres by teasing out the ends a little and tie in around the midpoint of the fibres, encircling the shank. Then fold the forward half of the fibres back and tie down well.

PICTURE 2: Step 2 and 3

Tie in two more clumps of the same thickness, the first 13.5 cm and the next 12 cm, using the same method. Tie these bunches down well and back over the bump of the previous bunch each time so you achieve a good control, instead of a mess of wildly flaring fibres. You should now see a good profile developing.

PICTURE 3: Step 4 and 5

Now change our colours up a bit, tying half the fibres around the top in iron blue Hologfusion and half the fibres around the bottom in white Ghost Fibre. So you're still tying in bunches around the thickness of a pencil, split with half on top and half on the bottom. Tie in one split bunch 11 cm in length, then move forward and tie in another split bundle 10 cm in length. You can add a little red at this point for some gills or some extra flash along the flanks for dirty water flies.

PICTURE 4: Step 6 and 7

Finally tie in two more bunches, this time with black Ghost Fibre on top and white Ghost Fibre on the bottom. Both clumps should be about 9 cm in length. Strip out a little of the flash in the final bunch to replicate that bright, but not flashy, belly and back.

PICTURE 5: Step 8

Finish with an epoxy head and some 3D eyes, stick them on so that they sit on the fibres, immediately behind the thread. Apply the epoxy with one good drop of epoxy between the eyes on top and another drop on the underside, then roll another large drop around the thread as you rotate your vise.

