

Fly Lines

Flatface

Jon Makim

As a fly tyer one of the things I enjoy most is pouring myself a glass of my favourite drink and sitting down at the vise to experiment. This is usually best done with no particular plan in place and just grabbing half a dozen random materials and trying to mould them into something. This can often produce some new ideas and very productive flies; it's the fly tyers version of the surfers 'expression session'. This is exactly how the Flatface came into being. I first tied this fly around eight or nine years ago now and, apart from changing the eyes, the design of it remains the same as the original. These days most of my mates will have a chuckle if I mention chasing flathead on fly but after eleven years of fly fishing they still hold a special place in my heart. I just love them and the Flatface is my absolute favourite fly for catching them.

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Where best to use the Flatface? Well, I really like it in most typical flathead holding areas; anywhere you find weed beds, yabby banks, dropoffs, creek mouths and bridges, especially when two or more of these features coincide with each other.

A light, long, flourocarbon leader teamed with a clear intermediate line works best for me and I would usually cast it on a six weight, which will provide ample firepower in most situations and is enough to easily cast the Flatface.

Presentation is pretty straight forward. Allow the fly to sink in a likely looking area then use a skip, skip, pause retrieve. If there are hungry flathead in the area they will almost certainly make themselves known. They will also follow the fly right to your feet in many instances, which then requires a short roll cast back out a few metres and they will usually climb all over it. Flathead are by no means fussy eaters; cover enough likely water and you will soon be sliding some beautiful duskies and bartails up the bank.

A quick word on material choices for this fly. Most importantly I much prefer lighter eyes as they will allow the fly to skip nicely along the bottom, just touching the sand, giving the fly the appearance of a yabby in flight or a small whiting nosing around, whereas heavier eyes will dig through the bottom making the fly look like some sort of kaleidoscopic sand plough! I also like the range of colours through the fly as I think it allows the fish to pick it up in many different conditions. Finally, the natural materials give the fly plenty of action. The longer you can make the wing the better it will fish a lot of the time.

So that's the Flatface, without a doubt my favourite fly. I hope you have as much fun with it as I do.



MATERIALS

Hook: Tiemco 8089 nickel size 2

Thread: Pink flat waxed thread

Tail: Blood red marabou

Body: Pink super salt chenille

Wing: Red deer tail, chartreuse deer tail, yellow krystal flash, yellow grizzly neck hackle, peacock herl.

Eyes: Real eyes plus in pearl/nickel.

Step 1: Tie in some pink flat wax thread in the middle of the shank and take it back to the bend. Tie in two or three bunches of blood red marabou, then take your thread right forward and tie in some small Real Eyes Plus just behind the eye of the hook.

Step 2: Tie in some super salt chenille in hot pink and wind it forward, tying it off just behind the eyes. Follow this with some red deer tail. Try and match the colour of the marabou if possible, it just looks better that way!

Step 3: Add half a dozen strands of yellow krystal flash, tying them in the middle and then folding them back. Top that with some chartreuse bucktail.

Step 4: Finally add a yellow grizzly neck hackle on each side and finish with four pieces of peacock herl on top for good luck.

