

Borski Shrimp by Jack Lehman (AFF NL August, 2009)

If you are planning a trip to Padre Island National Seashore (PINS) surf trip there are often several species of baitfish in the water. There are several versions of baitfish patterns that are available, but another option I have found successful are shrimp patterns. Shrimp are always an option for fishing in saltwater. Here I am presenting the Borski Craft Fur Shrimp. Tim Borski is a famous South Florida Guide and Fly Designer, and this is a pattern he has developed that uses relative available and inexpensive materials to create a quick and durable shrimp pattern.

The bead chain eyes used in this pattern are probably not heavy enough to invert the hook, so a weedguard is added to reduce snags and tangling with weeds, though that is rarely a problem in the surf. The weight is intended to help with the jigging action of the fly, since the shrimp it is designed to mimic do not swim steadily, but in short, jerky strips. The tail of the fly has an additional twist to keep the tailing material up and away from fouling the hook. I've also tied this fly using large brass bead chain eyes and these look good as well.

When you get down to the surf, use a heavy bite tippet or a wire leader. Most of the fish we will catch in the surf have sharp teeth, and the rest don't seem to be leader shy, so you won't lose many opportunities. Watch for birds picking something out of the surf, or for the splashes of predator fish attacking bait at the surface. Sometimes we are even able to see the fish outlined in the surf. Many times these blitzes are over quickly, so be ready to get your fly out quickly. However, if you seem to be catching only small fish in these blitzes, consider casting beyond the splashes and letting your line and fly sink deeper beneath the surface. Sometime larger fish hang out below the action, hoping to clean up on the scraps.

Materials

Hook: Standard shank saltwater #1-#2/0 Tiemco 800S

Tail: Craft Fur, tan or sand

Head: Estaz Grande, chartreuse or pink

Weedguard: Hard Mono

Thread: 3/0 or 140 denier or heavier, white or match tail

Collar: Strung Neck Hackle

Eyes: Large Bead Chain

Marker: Brown or Black permanent ink



Step 1: Sharpen and debarb the hook if desired. Start your thread at the eye and start a solid thread wrap back toward the rear. Stop and tie in your bead eyes about 1/3 back on the hook shank. Tie the eyes on using a figure 8 wrap. Hold the eyes in place and make 5 wraps across the eyes in one direction, then 10 wraps in the other, then 5 more in the first. Complete the figure 8 wrap by taking 3 or 4 wraps around the eyes and over the hook. Continue your solid thread wrap around the shank back to the bend of the hook. Some super glue on the eyes will help ensure that they stay in place.



Step 2: Cut a large bunch of the craft fur off of its backing. Clean the fur, much as you would a bunch of bucktail, by holding it by the tips and stripping any fuzz or short hairs out of the base of the bunch. Cut the entire bunch to the desired length and tie it in on top of the hook shank at the rear of the hook.



Step 3: To keep the tail from fouling around the hook bend, we will force the hair away from the bend. Hold the craft fur tail up away from the hook and take 8-10 wraps around the base of the craft fur (only). Note how the tail is now held up away from the hook.



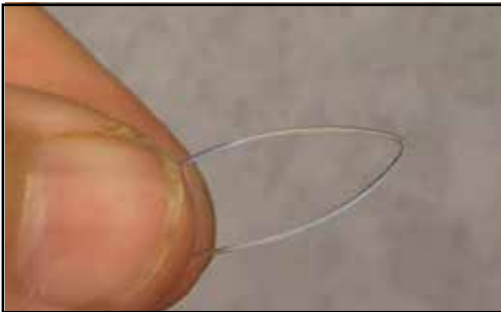
Step 4: Choose two hackle feathers and prepare them for use. They should be long enough to make several wraps around the fly. Match up the ends and clean the fuzz off of the stem end of the feathers. Trim both feathers to the same length and tie them on to the fly at the same point where you tied in the craft fur.



Step 5: Make sure your thread is now at the front of the craft fur tie in point. Wrap the two saddle hackles forward together to completely cover the butt ends of the craft fur. Take several thread wraps to bind down the hackle feathers and trim off any excess.



Step 6: Tie in a piece of the estaz grande and move your thread forward to just behind the eyes. Make several wraps of the estaz to form a thick body, ending just behind the eyes. Take several wraps with your thread to bind off the estaz and cut off any excess. Move your thread to the middle of the shank section in front of the eyes.



Step 7: Cut off a 3-inch piece of the hard mono. Fold it in half and form a tight crease at the bend.



Step 8: Invert the fly in your vise. Fold the mono around the hook in front of the eyes. Do not pull the mono tight against the hook but leave it just below the hook as shown. Take several wraps around the mono to hold it in place.



Step 9: Continue to wrap your thread forward to bind the crease of the mono up against the hook. Now wrap your thread back and take several wraps directly behind the mono to force the ends straight up away from the hook. Take several figure 8 style wraps between the mono ends to separate them and hold them in place. You should end up with two prongs of mono moving up and away from the fly, forming a deep 'V' that protects the hook point. Once you are happy with the result, whip finish and cut off your thread. You should cut off the ends of the mono so that they are about 1/4 inch longer than the hook point.

Step 10: Lay the fly on a safe surface and use the permanent marker to create several bands in the craft fur tail. It usually works best to dab the marker rather than using brush strokes. Turn the fly over and reinforce the banding from the other side of the fly.

