

# Borski Red Slider by Jack Lehman (AFF NL August, 2013)

Many beginning fly tyers are cautious about starting with deer hair. They've watched the real experts spend hours working on some of their creations, and know they couldn't easily replicate that level of work. Borski's slider is a good place to get some easy experience. A couple of the basic techniques are used here, but there is no need to get the tight packing that are used in some of the deer hair creations.

The Borski Redfish Slider is an upsized version of the Borski Slider, which was developed for use with bonefish. The light lead eyes should be enough to flip the fly over to swim hook point up, but it is still light enough to land quietly. If tied correctly, the fly should sink slowly and swim below the surface. The creator, Tim Borski, is a saltwater guide and artist living and working in south Florida.

The deer hair wing over the hook point will help to keep the fly weedless and the sharp nosed conical head will also help the fly move easily through the water. Use the fly under clear conditions in shallow water when the fish are relatively spooky.

Because you want the fly to sink, you want to use your deer hair sparsely. Just two small bunches are enough to complete the fly. There are two basic ways of tying deer hair, stacking, and spinning, and this fly uses both. But there is no need to create the tightly packed deer hair bodies seen on many flies. In fact, you want to stay away from that result. Deer hair is similar to a piece of bamboo; mostly hollow with cross sections. It tends to float, and leaving the fly too bulky or adding too much hair will overwhelm the eyes and prevent the fly from sinking.

When wrapped tightly with thread, deer hair will flare out, bending at the tie in point. The first bunch you tie in is typical of the technique known as stacking. You allow the hair to flare, but don't allow it to spin around the hook shank. When you cut deer hair off the leather, you usually need to do a little cleaning before it is ready to use. There is usually some under fur that needs to be removed, and some short or broken hairs that may mar the appearance of your fly. As an optional step here, you can use a tool called a deer hair stacker to even up the tips of the hair. Insert the bundle of hair into the stacker, tips down, and tap it on a hard surface a few times. The ends will now be even when you remove the hair from the stacker. If you don't have a stacker, you can remove the long hairs and either discard them or add them back into the bundle.

The other technique learned in this fly is spinning deer hair. Hold the bundle of deer hair in place and make a couple of loose wraps around it, very close together. When pulled tight, the hair will start to flare, and if you let it, the hair will begin to spin around the hook. Keep pulling tightly on the thread and make a couple more wraps with your thread. Keep pulling tight until the hair stops spinning. Wiggle your thread through the hair toward the front of the bundle and make a couple more wraps around the hook shank. If you are tying a fly requiring more bundles, you would use your fingers or a packing tool to pack this bundle as tightly back as possible, then add the next bundle just in front of the previous one.

Trimming the deer hair is an art in itself. Double edged razor blades, used very carefully, or specialized deer hair scissors which have serrated blades are the two tools used most often. There is no right way or wrong way. Many very skilled tyers use each of these methods, or a combination of the two. Watch some good tyers to get some tips, then develop your own preferences through experience. Just remember that you need to find a point when you stop trimming. Trying to get too perfect, and you'll eventually work your way back down to the bare hook shank.

## MATERIALS

**Hook:** Standard Saltwater Hook (#2 Mustad 34007 shown)

**Thread:** 140 denier or 6/0 flat wax nylon, color to match fly

**Collar:** Red Saddle Hackle

**Eyes:** Small lead dumbbell eyes

**Tail:** Tan Craft Fur

**Head:** Tan Deer Body Hair



**Step 1:** Start your thread just behind the eye and build a solid thread base back for about a half inch. Tie a pair of small barbell eyes, leaving about one quarter inch open space behind the hook eye. It helps to lock the eyes down with a drop of super glue.



**Step 2:** Prepare a small bunch of the tan craft fur. Cut it off the backing and pull any short hairs out of the bunch. The tail should extend about two hook lengths behind the fly. You can trim the bundle before or after tying it onto the hook. Tie in the bundle right behind the dumbbell eyes.



**Step 3:** Trim the excess craft fur off just behind the dumbbell eyes if you haven't already. Take a black or dark brown marker and add several vertical bands to the tail.



**Step 4:** Tie in a red hack feather, by the tip, over the tie-in point of the tail. Wrap the feather forward in very close wraps to just behind the dumbbell eyes. Tie it off with a few thread wraps and cut off any excess.



**Step 5:** Invert the hook in the vise. Clip and prepare a small bunch of light brown deer hair. Clean any loose fluff or broken hairs from the bunch. Even the tips in a hair stacker if you choose, but it is not necessary. Hold the deer hair bunch so that the tips extend back over the hook point. Keep hold of the deer hair so it does not have a chance to spin, and take a couple of loose wraps around the deer hair bunch. Pull straight down and hard so that the deer hair flares out. Make a couple of more wraps directly over the previous wraps. Wiggle your thread through the hair, pull the butt ends of the deer hair back, and make several wraps between the deer hair and the dumbbell eyes.



**Step 6:** Return your hook to the normal position. Prepare another small bunch of the deer hair and clean out any short hairs and loose fluff. This time, cut off the tips of the deer hair. Hold the deer hair between the dumbbell eyes and the hook eye and take two loose wraps around the center of the bundle.



**Step 7:** Pull down tightly on the thread. This time, let the deer hair spin around the hook. AT first, do this slowly, your speed will improve as you get more experience. As the hair begins to spin and flare, make a couple more tight wraps directly over the previous ones. Wiggle your thread through the deer hair to in front of the bundle and make a couple more tight wraps around the hook shank in front of the hair. Push the hair back with your fingers or a deer hair packer. Make several more wraps to build up a head, then whip finish and cut off your thread.

**Step 8:** Using scissors or a razor blade, shape a conical deer hair head for the fly. The deer hair should be trimmed fairly close, so that the natural flotation of the deer hair does not make the fly float too readily. Do not trim the tips of the first bundle. We will leave these as a wing and weed guard. Use the hook eye as your guide and trim back at a slight angle.

