

## Streamer Ties with Tom Regina... Bunny Baitfish

The Bunny Baitfish was originally tied as a tube fly by Alberto Jimeno. However I have chosen to tie it as a standard streamer and have made some modifications to the original to better adapt the fly to a streamer hook. (You can see Jimeno's original pattern at [www.flyanglersonline.com](http://www.flyanglersonline.com)). Because this streamer has a relatively long rabbit fur zonker strip wing I have added a monofilament non-fouling guard at the hook bend to prevent the wing from fouling the hook gap or point when the fly is cast.

My version, as well as Jimeno's is tied without added weight. I normally fish streamers on a sink tip line with a short heavy leader (2X or 3X). The weight of the sink tip and the wet fur and hide of the rabbit strips are weighty enough to quickly submerge the fly in all but the fastest currents. You can dress the Bunny Baitfish streamer with added weight if you will be fishing it with a full floating line and/or in fast currents. This weight can be in the form of non-toxic wire wrapped as an underbody or as a beadhead or conehead.

The Bunny Baitfish is speedy and easy to tie and can be tied in many colors or color combinations. The narrow, supple strips of rabbit fur give it a fluid swimming action that is highly mobile underwater like marabou. Rabbit fur hide strips maintain wing and tail shape much better than limper marabou. And as a bonus, rabbit fur hide strips are easy to work with. For a more in-depth schooling on the uses of and techniques of tying with crosscut and zonker rabbit fur hide strips consult "*The Fly Tier's Benchside Reference to Techniques and Dressing Styles* by Ted Leeson and Jim Schollmeyer". This book is available in our club library.

Alberto Jimeno originally designed his Bunny Baitfish as a tube fly for river smallmouth bass fishing. I have used my interpretation of the streamer to catch and release many trout on rivers and streams of western North Carolina. Art and I will give the bunny a try on the Little Tennessee River in North Carolina in hopes of enticing some bronzesbacks to hand. I mostly cast the Bunny Baitfish quartering upstream, give it time to sink then retrieve it with quick short strips through good trout holding water and feeding lanes. I will also cast it quartering upstream, allow the fly to sink.... and keeping connected with the fly let it swing downstream while twitching the rod tip to impart action to the bunny. When the streamer starts to rise at the end of the swing I will retrieve it with intermittent short and long strips and pauses through a current seam.

### Tying Instructions

Hook	Mustad 9672, 3XL, size 4
Thread	Gudebrod GX2, white 107
Non-Fouling Guard	30-Lb. Clear monofilament
Tail/Wing	Olive rabbit zonker strip
Body	White crosscut rabbit strip
Head	Gudebrod 8/0 black 118 thread, painted eyes, epoxy



*Note: Rabbit strips are cut from the pelt longitudinal (zonker) or latitudinal (crosscut). In either case the fur flows in a natural direction. With the rabbit strip in front of you and the fur flowing or pointing to your left the front of the strip is to your right.*



1. Debarb the hook and fix it in the vise. Using a jam knot start the thread 3/16" back from the hook eye. In neat touching turns wrap the thread back to the hook bend. Cut about a 2" piece of monofilament from the spool. (*Note: Red monofilament is used here for illustration purposes*). Bind one tag end of the mono to the far side of the hook for a distance of about 3/8" forward from the hook bend. Form a loop in the monofilament that extends past the end of the hook about one hook gap. Secure the other tag end of the mono to the near side of the hook.

2. From the front of an olive rabbit or zonker strip cut the hide so the total length of the hide portion of the wing is equal to the hook length plus the mono guard loop. (*Note: When cutting the hide work your scissors through the fur so when you cut the hide you will not cut the fur*). From the back of the wing hide measure a distance equal to the length of the mono loop plus 1/4". Work your scissors or bodkin through the fur at this point and separate the fur down to the hide. Where the fur is separated and without trapping fur with thread wraps, tie the strip onto the top of the hook at the hook bend so the hide extends over and 1/4" beyond the mono loop.

3. From the front of a white crosscut rabbit strip, strip away about 1/8" of fur and cut the hide to a point. Lift the front of the olive wing back out of the way. Just in front of the olive strip tie in the white rabbit strip by the point, hide side up with the fur flowing back. In quick spiral wraps return the thread forward to the thread tie on point.

## Streamer Ties with Tom Regina...continued



4. In tight touching, but not overlapping wraps, palmer the crosscut strip forward to just past the thread tie on point. With each wrap stroke the fur to the rear so as not to trap any fur under successive wraps. End the last wrap at the top of the hook. Separate the fur down to the hide and tie off the crosscut strip with several tight thread wraps. At a shallow angle cut away the tag end of the crosscut strip.

5. Separate the palmered fur from the top of the fly body to the sides. Pull the front of the olive strip tightly over the top of the fly and tie it off just in back of the hook eye with several tight thread wraps that can be allowed to trap some fur. At a shallow angle cut away the tag end of the olive rabbit strip. Bind down the strip tag end. Whip finish the thread wraps and cut away the tying thread.

6. For a neat head change to the 8/0 black thread and build a relatively large thread head.

7. Epoxy the head. (See "Keeping Epoxy in its Place" in the September 2005 issue of *Flies & Lies*). After the epoxy cures paint on the eyes. Allow the paint to dry and re-epoxy the head.

### A PAIR THAT WILL BEAT A FULL HOUSE



**JOHN BRAND WITH A NICE ONE FROM THE TUKESEGEE**



**KAREN BRAND WITH A NICER ONE - SAME PLACE**



## PHOTO GALLERY



**A FATHER & DAUGHTER WITH A PAIR OF NICE MARCH REDS.... PHOTO BY CAPT BOB QUARLES**

### A WILD BROOKIE CAUGHT BY TRAVIS ON BRADLEY FORK



**SNOW COVERED FERN ON A COLD MORNING**



**KEVIN, WE FOUND YOUR HAT!**

