

Crayfish.... Tom Regina

Crayfish, crawfish, or crawdads are fresh water crustaceans resembling small lobsters, to which they are probably closely related. They breathe through feather-like gills and are found in bodies of water that do not freeze to the bottom; they are also mostly found in brooks, streams, and rivers where there is fresh water running, and which have shelter against predators. Most crayfish cannot tolerate polluted water.

Crayfish like it dark and cool, and during much of the daylight they will be found alone, withdrawn under a rock or a clump of vegetation, waiting for dark, at which time they come out to forage for food. That's what crayfish mostly do: loaf all day and look for food all night. That's also what big brown trout do and why a crayfish imitation is a good choice for catching big brown trout in the evening and at night.

Tying Materials

Hook:	Mustad 9672 (R74)*, 4XL, size 4
Thread:	6/0 brown
Eyes:	Large (5/32-inch) brown bead chain
Weight:	Size .020-inch lead free wire
Shellback:	Brown Polypropylene yarn
Claws:	Brown marabou blood plumes
Body:	Medium, dark brown Rayon chenille
Gills:	Brown rooster saddle hackle
Rib:	Small copper Ultra Wire
Tail:	Extended shellback yarn



* O. Mustad & Son (USA), Inc. is in the process of changing the design and/or numbering system or designation of hooks. In this and future recipes published in *Flies & Lies* the number of the "Mustad Signature" hook that is replacing the specified "Classic" hook will be included in parentheses when it is known by the author.

Tying Instructions



1. Debarb the hook and place it in the vise. Using a jam knot, start the thread at the hook eye and lay down a neat thread base back to a point directly above the hook barb. Take the thread forward to a position directly above the hook point.



2. At the thread hang point, tie in the bead chain eyes on top of and perpendicular to the hook shank with several crisscross thread wraps. Cut about a 4-inch length of lead free wire from the spool. Start the wire 1/8-inch in front of the eyes tie-in point and wrap it forward in 15 neat touching turns. Cut or break away the wire tag ends.



3. Bind the lead free wire to the hook shank and build a shallow angled thread ramp from the front of the wire to a point on the hook shank equal to half the distance between the front of the wire and the hook eye.



4. For the shellback, cut a 4-inch length of Polypropylene yarn from the skein and tie it onto the top of the hook at the thread hang point. Pull the poly yarn over the top of the hook, between the eyes, and onto the hook bend. Bind the yarn to the top of the

hook, over and between the eyes, to the position directly above the hook barb. Take the thread forward to a position in back of and adjacent to the eyes.



5. Select two marabou blood plumes for the claws. Strip plumage from the quills so each plume is of equal or near equal density or bulk. *After sizing the plumes, it will be easier to accomplish the claw tie-in and separation if you first wet the marabou.* Measure the first claw so its length will be equal to the distance from the hook eye to the bead chain eyes. Tie on the first claw in back of the eyes, on the side of the hook away from you, in the space between the back of the eyes and the last thread wraps used to bind the shellback in step 4. *Tie the claws in closer to the back of the eyes than the back of the last shellback binding thread wraps.* Wet and measure the second claw so its length is the same as the

first claw. In the same manner as was the first claw, tie the second claw to the side of the hook facing you. When tied in properly, the claws should extend out about 30 to 45 degrees from the hook on both sides. Pull the tag ends of the mara-

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bou plumes over and between the eyes and bind them to the top of the hook to a position just short of the last lead free wire wraps toward the front of the hook. At this point make two or three tight thread wraps and let the bobbin hang. At a shallow angle, so as to produce a neatly tapered body, cut away the rest of the marabou tag so its slope extends from the front of the wire to a point on the hook shank half way between the front of the wire and the hook eye. Wet the sloped marabou and continue to bind it to the top of the hook to where the slope ends. Wrap the thread forward half the distance to the hook eye.



6. Cut a 6-inch length of chenille from the skein and expose about 1/8-inch of core. Tie the exposed chenille core to the top of the hook at the thread hang point. Bind the chenille to the top of the hook shank to a point directly in front of and adjacent to the bead chain eyes. Take several wraps of chenille behind and around the eyes then tie off the chenille in front of and adjacent to the eyes but do not cut away the "excess" chenille.



7. Cut about a 6-inch length of rib wire from the spool. At the thread hang point, tie the wire onto the side of the hook facing you. Select an appropriate size rooster saddle hackle and tie it, convex side out, onto the side of the hook directly over the rib wire tie on thread wraps. Take the thread forward to the chenille tie-on point at the front of the hook. Wrap the chenille forward in neat touching turns to the thread hang point. Tie off the chenille and cut away the excess.



8. Palmer the hackle forward into the area between adjacent chenille wraps and tie it off at the thread hang point. Cut away the excess hackle.



9. Pull the shellback forward between the claws and the eyes and tie it off at the thread hang point. To form the tail cut away the poly yarn "tag" so the tail extends about 1/2-inch forward of the hook eye. Clip or cut away the hackle barbs on top of the body. In about 10 evenly spaced spiral turns wrap the rib wire forward and tie it off at the base of the tail. Cut away the rib wire tag. Cover the cut end of the rib wire with a few thread wraps. Whip finish the thread at the base of the tail and cut away the thread. Apply head cement to the finish thread wraps.

Note: When the marabou claws dry they will "fluff" up. When fishing the fly, the soft marabou claws will come together in front of the head of the fly when it is retrieved with short twitches of the rod tip. When the retrieve is halted the claws will spread out into the defensive posture of a natural crayfish.

The Tree... Jerry Giles

If a tree falls into your favorite fishing hole in the river and you are not there to hear it, does it still make a noise? Well, you sure make a noise when you see it!

That tree was so big that it ripped up part of the road above the river when it fell down the embankment. It covered the bottom third of the run above and half of the hole below. Over several years, I had learned every rock, hang-up and depths of every seam of that two hundred feet of stream.

Now, silt slowed by the tree has filled the hole to the point where the bottom is visible throughout. The rocks are covered with sand. The fish have abandoned it. It is difficult to explain my emotion upon seeing that devastation. It was as if I had suffered a great personal loss.

O.K. Maybe I am too deeply involved with fly-fishing and nature's fickle fate. But, as in life, a tree will surely fall in your favorite hole at an unexpected time. Wade on as best you can, and count on friends to guide and help you. Once again, I quote from a favorite song, "Life goes and goes like a river flows, and time just rolls right on. Sometimes the good gets a little bit better, and sometimes the bad gets gone." Good fishing!--Jerry Giles