

Streamer Ties with Tom Regina
Brown Marabou Leech (Original pattern by Dave Hughes)

Trout eat leeches - but probably not enough to become selective to them. However leech flies do catch lots of trout and your streamer fly box should always have some leech patterns in it. With that said, we can assume trout will be willing to assault a leech pattern if the naturals are a part of the fishes environment. Leeches are quite common in ponds and lakes. In rivers, streams, and creeks of moving water they will be most numerous in the gravel of riffles and runs with algae where aquatic insects they feed on are present. Leeches look like worms. They swim, move, or travel with undulating movement. Leech dressings need not be exact imitations of the naturals and can be dressed as, and considered, searching patterns. In the opinion of many fly anglers and tiers, the best leech patterns are tied with marabou and/or rabbit fur hide strips. Marabou and narrow, supple rabbit strips impart realistic, fluid, undulating, swimming action to leech patterns - the actions necessary to attract trout. Although leeches may grow to 3 or 4 inches long, most fly anglers and fly dressers use and tie leech patterns 1 - 2 inches long. The most common leech imitations colors are black, brown, tan, light and dark olive, purple, and wine red.

Leech imitations are most effective when fished deep. On still waters, cast your leech fly with a sinking or sink tip line. Let the fly sink slowly and deep. Be ready for a strike which may happen during this non-retrieve part of the retrieve. Make the retrieve with a creeping hand-twist as slow as you can. Then do it slower. When you feel a strike set the hook. If you feel a tap, drop the rod tip, make a two count and softly raise the rod tip. If you're not hooked-up the trout may turn and try again.

On moving waters of a river, stream, or creek, depending on the current, use a floating line with a long leader or a sink tip line with a short leader. Cast directly upstream or quartering upstream. Stay connected to the fly and allow it to sink and dead drift with the current. The limp marabou or rabbit fur will undulate and impart natural leech movement. When the fly starts to swing toward the end of the dead drift pick it up and recast. As an alternative allow the leech fly to swing fully downstream and retrieve it with a very slow hand-twist. Although a leech may not be able to swim upstream, this unnatural tactic can work in heavily stocked waters.

Materials

Hook	Mustad 9672, 3XL, size 6
Head	3/16-inch black tungsten bead
Thread	Gudebrod 6/0 brown BCS 98
Underbody	Tying thread
Tail and wing	Brown marabou blood quills, dark Angel Hair or Lite Bright (flash)



Tying Instructions



1. Debarb the hook. Place the bead head on the hook and mount the hook in the vise. Using a jam knot attach the thread to the hook shank directly in back of the bead head. In neat touching turns wrap a thread base back to the hook bend.

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2. At the hook bend and on top of the hook tie in four strands of flash. Return the thread to the hook bend.



3. At the hook bend tie on the tail plume of marabou measured to extend one hook length beyond the back of the hook. Pull the butt end of the plume forward over the top of the hook shank and tie it down with quick spiral wraps of thread to the bead. Cut away the butt end of the tail plume. In quick spiral turns return the thread to the hook bend. Trim the tail flash even with the back of the tail marabou plume.



4. Wrap the thread forward 1/4 the hook shank length distance. On top of the hook shank tie in another four strands of flash. Trim the flash even with the middle of the tail marabou plume. Tie in another marabou plume measured to extend to the middle of the tail marabou plume. Wrap the thread forward another 1/4 hook shank length distance and cut away the butt of this second plume. 5. Repeat the process by overlapping half of each previous flash/marabou tie on with successive ties of flash/marabou.



6. After tying the last marabou plume on at the back of the bead head tie off the thread wraps with several half hitch or whip finish wraps. Cut away the thread and cement the thread tie off wraps without getting cement on the marabou.

Clues - Don't have a leech in your fly box? Use a wooly bugger. Bronze-backs are also known to gobble leeches.

Tips from Tom & Jerry

Jerry Giles....If you have the chance to pick up tying feathers or fur from a hunter friend, and are worried that they might contain little critters, here is a tip you can try: Nuke them in the microwave. That should kill any mites or other organisms present.

Tom Regina....Common reasons fly lines become twisted: 1. Casting: Many casters have a semi-elliptical casting stroke, not straight line front to back. Many casters also roll cast at least occasionally, both casts cause line twist. Small diameter lines are more prone to twisting than others. 2. Reel Loading: If you load the reel incorrectly it can cause line twist. 3. Spool Stripping: If you allow the line or reel spool to drop line (similar to the way line comes off a spinning reel) it will cause twist. **CORRECTING THE PROBLEM:** Twist can be removed from a fly line by trailing the line, without a fly, behind a boat or in river current. Line twist can also be removed by rotating the rod in a clockwise direction (for a right handed caster, reverse for left) above your head with 15-20' of line out for 20-30 revolutions. This twists the line in the opposite direction eliminating the problem. *From a public document by 3M Scientific Anglers.*

Hooks are sized by a number that represents the distance between the point and the inside of the hook shank or gap. Large hooks (1/0, 2/0, 3/0, etc.) increase in size as the number increases. Small hooks (2, 4, 6, . . . 18, 20, etc.) decrease in size as the number increases.

When you sharpen a fish hook, with the exception of stainless steel, you will cause the rusting process to start. Sharpening files cut away the protective coating from the spear. When you sharpen a non-stainless steel hook, cover the filed point with black permanent marker ink.