

Tying Bench — J.J. Hopper by Jeff Janecek

Jeff's J.J. Hopper is a nice all foam grass hopper imitation that has proven to be one of his most productive flies. The chartreuse colored foam provides good floatation and is easy to see.

Materials:

Hook: 2X thin wire #8

Thread: chartreuse flat waxed nylon

Body: 1/8" thick chartreuse craft foam

Eye: 1/8" thick black craft foam

Legs: Black on chartreuse centipede rubber legs

Tying Instructions:

- Place 2x thin wire #8 hook in vise. Wrap chartreuse flat wax thread, from hook eye, to bend of hook and back to middle.
- Cut a 3/8" by 4" piece of craft foam and cut an arrow on one end. Face the arrow to the hook eye, in the middle of the hook shank. Wrap arrow very tightly. Then 1/8th wraps up to the hook bend.
- Place two fingers over foam with left hand. Using right hand, tie 1/4" away; forming a round abdomen. Wrap up to behind hook eye. Tie three equal segments from abdomen. to hook eye.
- Cut a 1/2" by 1/2" square from black craft foam. With thread behind hook eye, place square over hook eye; to form a triangle. Tie just the tip of the triangle. Cut the black square horizontal and wrap chartreuse foam over toward abdomen.. Trim just behind head, follow three segments to abdomen.
- Use black on chartreuse centipede legs, tie a knot 1 1/2" from end, place over abdomen. Patiently wait till there is a nice 45 degree angle away from fly, tie over three segments to just behind head, cut leg 1" away from head. Repeat for opposite side .Whip finish.
- Use flex cement in between legs. Trim front legs to 1/2" long and squeeze rear legs together and cut to 1" long.



J.J. Hopper from top: side view and top view. Tied by Jeff Janecek. Sequeira photos

A few tying and fishing tips

I buy flex cement from an archery store. It does not dry the rubber legs. I get centipede legs from "THE FLY SHOP" online or Cabelas. I like thin wire hooks as they are very sharp and need a very little hook set. Use 6 to 8lb tippet. Retrieve in 1" strips with little pauses. Very deadly on Withalacoochee, Weeki Wachee, Hillsborough, and Rainbow rivers. I prefer a 3 wt when fishing these rivers. It loads up instantly and is very accurate. Use a 2 ft off the water backcast to stay clear of any branches. If distracted and you do get snagged...it is very easy to free at this height. Get very accurate with your casting always looking for a target and not just casting. Challenge yourself with that little nook or just under that branch. Your accuracy will increase and you just might be rewarded with a little surprise also. Explore ponds around your home. It is fun to be fishing than to just practicing in the yard. I've found ponds that when I have an hour of free time.. I visit. Try a 3wt it will hone your timing skills and teach you not to muscle a fly rod. Not to mention, a nice bluegill is a blast to fight with..