

Tying Bench – Baboon Crab Fly By Layne “Smitty” Smith

The Baboon developed by Gregg Bowdish is a hybrid crab/shrimp fly designed for fishing the clear water red-fish flats of Matlacha Pass and Pine Island Sound. It's sparse, synthetic body coupled with small dumbbell eyes allows it to sink quickly, yet be much easier to cast than traditional weighted crab patterns. With the Polar Fibre tail causing it to sink at the proper, crab-like angle and the wiggly rubber legs to get the fish's attention; it is no wonder why redfish go out of their way to gobble them up.

As tied in the instructions below, the Baboon is an extremely effective attractor pattern for redfish. In many circumstances, however, I find it more effective to switch to a dark brown or tan version of the baboon using Aunt Lydia's Rug Yarn in place of the Mylar tubing. Like any fly pattern, the baboon can be tied in any color variation to match any local flats fodder and I encourage you to try different colors to suit different situations.



“Fire Tiger” Baboon tied by Smitty
Sequeira photo

Materials needed for "Fire-tiger" Baboon:

- Hook: Size 4 Mustad Signature Big Game Light hook
- Thread: Black flat waxed nylon thread
- Tail: Hot Orange Polar Fibre
- Antenna: Black Krystal Flash
- Eyes: Black plastic bead eyes
- Legs: Barred Olive rubber legs
- Body: Large Copper Mylar Tubing
- Weight: Small lead dumbbell eyes
- Weedguard: 20 or 30# mono.
- Cement: Sally Hanson's Hard as Nails or your favorite head cement.

Tying Sequence

1. Wrap the entire hook shank and half way into the bend with black flat waxed nylon thread.
2. On the outside bend of the hook, tie in six strands of black Kystal Flash. (Two should be about 3' long and the remaining four should be about 2" long)
3. Cut a clump of Hot Orange Polar Fibre from the "skin", comb out under-fur, line up tips and tie on to outside bend of hook directly on top of Crystal Flash.
4. On the INSIDE bend of the hook, tie in black plastic bead eyes figure-eight style directly across from the hook barb. The eyes I use come from a black bead necklace, but can be substituted with large black mono eyes.

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5. Next, on the shank of the hook, just before the bend, tie in four 1" long, barred-olive rubber legs. If you have a rotary vise, turn the fly over for the next step.
6. Leaving some space, figure eight a 1 inch section of large copper mylar tubing to the **INSIDE** of the hook shank. (You can substitute Aunt Lydia's Rug Yarn for more subdued color variations.)
7. Leaving a gap, tie in another 1 inch section of large copper mylar tubing. Turn the fly over for the next step.
8. Tie the lead eyes to the **TOP** of the hook shank directly behind the eye of the hook. Rotate the fly once again.
9. For a weed guard, bend a piece of 20 or 30# mono into the shape of a "V" and tie in between the dumbbell eyes and the closest section of Mylar tubing. Whip finish, trim the weed guard, pick apart the Mylar tubing and flatten like two frayed wings.



Greg Bowdish's original Baboon Fly tied by Smitty
Sequeira photo

- Coat all visible thread wraps and the frayed tubing with head cement. Allow to dry and give it a second coat.
10. Trim the body to give it a crab shape and throw at your nearest redfish! The original "Baboon Fly" was tied to imitate a blue crab. The colors used blues, whites, and oranges; hence the name "Baboon".

Here are the materials for the original "Baboon"...

Materials needed for "Original" Baboon:

- Hook: Size 4 Mustad Signature Big Game Light hook
- Thread: Florescent Blue flat waxed nylon thread
- Tail: Hot Orange Arctic Fox (or substitute same color Polar Fibre)
- Antenna: Pearl Krystal Flash
- Eyes: Black plastic bead eyes
- Legs: Pearl with Hot Orange Fire-Tip legs
- Body: White Aunt Lydia's Rug Yarn or any Anton fibers
- Weight: Small lead dumbbell eyes
- Weedguard: 20 or 30# mono.
- Cement: Sally Hanson's Hard as Nails or your favorite head cement.