

## Saturday January, 4 2025 Free State Fly Fishers' Fly Tying Session 10 AM-12 PM

### Several More Smallmouth Bass Patterns

This Saturday Fly Tying Session will focus on tying several more of my favorite smallmouth bass fly patterns including more of Harry Murray's most effective fly patterns when fly fishing on rivers with smallmouth bass. During the following the January 2022 Saturday FSFF fly tying session, I demonstrated tying the following Harry Murray smallmouth bass fly patterns<sup>1</sup>: Murray's Hellgrammite, Murray's Skunk Road Kill Nymph, Murray's Blond Perch Bucktail and Murray's Crayfish. If you are interested in receiving a Word file with photos and materials, please email me and I will send you this file.

Be sure to bring the following fly tying tools with you if you have them: vise, bobbin, bobbin threader, bodkin, 6" ruler, scissors, hackler pliers, sharpening stone (optional), and pliers (optional). The club has vises and many of these fly tying tools available at the clubhouse for use by members so no worries if you don't have access to everything listed above. I will be bringing all the hooks and fly tying materials for tying these patterns, but please bring your own thread in black, yellow, and white colors.

Rich Batiuk

#### **Murray's Hellgrammite**

**Hook:** Mustad 9672 Sizes 4, 6, 8 and 10

**Thread:** Black 3/0

**Body:** Black large chenille

**Extended Rear Body:** Ostrich herl to match the body color

**Hackle:** Saddle or cape hackle to match the body color

**Pincers:** Black rubber

**Eyes/Weight:** Barbell eyes, small 6/32



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<sup>1</sup> From "Murray's Fly Shop Exclusive Fly Pattern Tying Instructions", a series of excellent fly tying books by Harry Murray available from his fly shop in Edinburg, Virginia or online at [www.murraysflyshop.com](http://www.murraysflyshop.com). My fly tying library includes the 2006, 2007, 2010, 2012, 2015, and 2018 versions, covering 92 different fly patterns each with color photos, lists of materials and very easy to follow written tying instructions.

This easy to tie fly is a must for your smallmouth bass fly box hence I am tying this pattern again for this fly tying session. Worked along the bottom of your favorite smallmouth bass stream or river, it's one of the best ways to pull out good sized-smallmouth bass. The pattern can be tied in black, olive and brown colors. Recommend having flies in each of these colors in your smallmouth bass fly box as both the light conditions you are fishing in as well as depending on where you are fishing, using these different colors will make a difference in your cast to catch ratios.

### **Murray's Honey Blond Bucktail**

**Hook:** Mustad 9672, sizes 4 and 6

**Thread:** Yellow 3/0

**Body:** Chartreuse estaz



**Wing & Tail:** Yellow bucktail and pearl krystal flash

**Weight:** Lead free wire, large

The late Joe Brooks introduced the Blond series to Harry Murray when he first started fly fishing. Harry Murray's version of the Blond series are basically the same patterns dressed up with new materials. This series includes the Honey, Strawberry (red estaz and red bucktail) and Platinum blonds (pearl estaz and white bucktail), changing the colors of the body and wings accordingly. My favorite pattern is still the Honey Blond, particularly when fly fishing the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers in the long pools just below a set of riffles. Watching your Honey Blond Bucktail disappear 30' away is truly priceless knowing the tug at the end of your rod is coming right up!

## Modified Girdle Bug<sup>2</sup>

**Hook:** Mustad 9672 Sizes 4, 6, and 8

**Thread:** Yellow 3/0

**Body:** Yellow medium/large crystal chenille

**Legs:** White rubber legs

**Tail:** pearl krystal flash and pearl flashabou

**Weight:** Lead free medium wire



Until the golden retriever fly came along, this fly pattern was by far my most effective pattern for catching a wide array of species followed by the wooly bugger pattern. To date, I have counted well over a dozen different species which I have hooked and landed casting this pattern, including smallmouth bass at the top of that list. Those rubber legs, when twitched on your retrieve, make this pattern just too much for fish to pass up! And this pattern have been KISS certified by our very own Mike Mattia: Keep It Super Simple. A KISS certified pattern is one which: 1) has a very simple list of materials (usually 3 or less sets of materials not including the hook); 2) many of the materials can be bought at Michaels or other craft stores; 3) is easy to tie; and 4) catches fish.

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<sup>2</sup> My personal name for this very favorite smallmouth bass fly is “Tom Gooding’s Shenandoah Smallmouth Killer” which goes way back almost 30 years ago when I first met Tom on a FSFF sponsored South Fork Shenandoah River outing, catching a ride with him from Annapolis and spending the day floating down the river. He shared this yellow looking fly with all these white legs sticking out. Well, several casts and several hookups later, I was literally hooks on this fly. Little did I know Tom and I would shortly be become lifelong friends, frequent fishing buddies and neighbors for the coming decades. A long time FSFF club member including many years as Club Treasurer, we lost Tom several years ago, but I still remember him when I tie on this fly on my leader, knowing I was about catch fish and that Tom was equally enjoying watching that smallmouth bass leap out of the water once again!

### Chuck Kraft's Kreelex Fly

**Hook:** Mustad 79580 Size 6 (or similar long-shank streamer hook)

**Thread:** White 140-denier

**Belly:** Silver Kreelex Fish Flash or similar tinsel

**Back:** Gold Kreelex Fish Flash or similar tinsel

**Eyes:** Plated lead eyes, medium



I have found that if no other fly pattern is causing smallmouth bass to strike, then my go to fly is Chuck Kraft's Kreelex fly. Even on a cloudy day, this fly reflects whatever sunlight gets through the cloud cover. There have been days fly fishing on the Rappahannock River where the only fly I needed was a Kreelex fly for the entire float. I am just glad I have several of the same pattern in my smallmouth bass fly box as they were getting chewed up by the sheer number of smallmouth bass which saw this pattern as a minnow flashing through the pools and ripples looking for refuge in the rocks!