

Baitfish Patterns:

1. Classic Emulator with flash

Hook: Daiichi 2461 size 1/0 or other large streamer hook 3xl or longer

Tail: Copper flashabou and Tan Grizzly Marabou

Body: Emu Feather wound tightly forward

Hackle: Schlappen, usually brown or olive

Pectoral Fins: A clump of mallard flank feather fibers tied on either side of fly

Head: Clump of Australian possum fur or ram's wool

Comments: Day in and day out, this is a very effective fly. Through a typical season, it accounts for more than half of my fish, and it is effective on lake run browns and stream trout as well. It's in my box 365 days of the year, as you never know when you might come across steelhead in Michigan, and this fly puts you in the game. The following variation is also good.

2. Short and Fat Emulator:

Hook: Daiichi 2461 size 1/0 or other large streamer hook 3xl or longer

Tail: Grizzly Marabou in tan or olive with metallic flashabou or choice

Body: Emu feather wound tightly forward

Hackle: Schlappen, olive or brown

Collar: Mallard flank, topped with optional sunburst flashabou

Head: Olive ram's wool, tied very fat

Comments: In high water, this fly can draw attention—the large head makes the flashabou active. Such a fly is also useful around boulders, as the large head can keep it from getting snagged. Long casts are necessary with such a fly, as it can take some distance to sink it and weighting the fly kills its action.

3. Leech:

Hook: Daiichi 2461 size 1/0 or other large streamer hook 3xl or longer

Tail: Black or Purple Marabou

Body: Another Black or Purple Marabou feather, wound forward

Hackle: Schlappen Feather, wound forward. Before tying in the schlappen, Tye some grape or sunburst flashabou at the front of the hook. With each turn of the schlappen forward, bring some of the flashabou back, forming a loose wing.

Collar: Claret ringneck pheasant rump feather, or large mallard flank.

Head: fluorescent estaz or egg yarn of your choice.

Comments: Skulking through the current, leeches produce throughout the year.

Steelhead in proximity to spawning salmon find them hard to resist. These are great for aggressive fish in the spring also.

4. Plastic Sculpin:

Hook: Daiichi 2461 size 1/0 or other large streamer hook 3xl or longer

Tail: A few strands of olive marabou, and a few strands of olive sili legs

Body: Emu feather, wound forward, interspersed with sili legs as a wing

Collar: Sili Legs, a mallard flank, and sunburst flashabou

Head: Australian Possum or ram's wool

Comments: This ridiculous looking fly has a lot of action and is at its best in slow pools and on the edges. When the water is cold, such flies can still produce.

5. Psycho Sculpin:

Rear Hook: Straight Eye streamer hook, size 10

Rear Tail and Body: 3 Clumps of Australian Possum tail, interspersed with green dubbing

Front Hook: Daiichi Boss egg hook, size 4 or 6.

Eyes: Pink or bright green plastic string eyes from a craft store

Head: Clump of Australian possum

Extras: Rubber Legs or sunburst flashabou, tied as a shellback with extra material pulled to the side as legs.

Comments: This is my best small stream fly. I don't know what type of forage they think it is exactly; I just know they like to murder it.

6. Motley Minnow:

Hook: Daiichi 2461 size 1/0 or other large streamer hook 3xl or longer

Tail: Silver Holographic Tinsel and grape flashabou

Wing and Hackle: Two mallard flank feathers tied in by the tips and stripped on one side, to be palmered forward, and a clump of white ram's wool tied in with the tips hanging over the front of the hook. With each turn of the mallard, a few strands of wool are pulled back as a wing on top of the hook.

Collar: Green died mallard flank

Topping: Powder Blue Marabou or olive and yellow marabou, depending on baitfish to be imitated.

Comments: This is a fall or spring fly; olive is a good topping if imitating chubs, blue is great if imitating smolt in the spring. Generally this fly is a good bet in warmer water temperatures.

7. Naked Possum

Hook: Daiichi 2461 size 1/0 or other large streamer hook 3xl or longer

Tail: Tan Grizzly marabou feathers

Body and Hackle: Several Clumps of Australian possum, tied so that the fluffy part of the fur remains and the tips are facing the eye of the hook. After each clump is tied in, a grizzly marabou feather is wound in front of it, thus raising the guard hairs so that the function as hackle.

Collar: One mallard flank feather and sparse grey arctic fox hair (optional).

Head: Thick clump of Australian possum, tied with tips facing back of hook.