

Tying a Cone Head Rabbit Strip Leech (aka Bunny Leech) by Don Fine*

Materials

- Standard streamer hook – e.g. Mustad 79580 (or Tiemco 5263), sizes 4 – 8 (I generally use size 6)
- Medium metal Cone¹ (or Bead) – size ¼” or 5/32”
- Thread – 6/0 color to match rabbit strip (e.g. black, dark olive)
- Zonker rabbit strips – colors should correspond to the stream bottom or vegetation
- Cross cut rabbit strips – color to match the Zonker rabbit strips
- Crystal flash – silver, gold, or another color which contrasts with the rabbit strip

Tying Steps

- After pinching down the hook barb, slide either a metal bead or cone onto the hook
- Place the hook in the vise and begin to make thread wraps immediately behind the cone stopping at the hook bend.
- Select a section of Zonker strip, length slightly longer than the hook shank. Cut a V into the blunt end of the rabbit strip.
- Lay the V –cut end on top of the hook and secure this end of the Zonker strip with multiple thread wraps.
- Select a section of cross-cut rabbit strip, cut one end of the strip to a small point. Then at the same location where the Zonker strip was tied in, secure the cross-cut strip such that the hair-fibers face toward the rear of the fly.
- Wrap the tying thread forward toward the cone (or bead) head.
- Then wrap the (cross-cut) rabbit strip around the hook shank with each wrap touching the previous wrap until the entire hook shank is covered, stopping immediately behind the cone (or bead) head.
- Secure the rabbit strip with several thread wraps. Following this take 3 strands of crystal flash and fold them in half around the tying thread.
- Secure ½ (of the crystal flash) strands on the near side of the fly with several thread wraps and then fold the other ½ of the strands over to the far side, secure with several thread wraps.
- Cut the crystal flash to the length of the hook shank
- Apply head cement to reinforce the head of the fly.

¹ A review of the internet tying videos show a variety of ways to tie the rabbit strip leech. Some of these feature the use of a cone head while others a metal bead head. I prefer using cone heads on patterns such as the bunny leech because the forward end of the cross-cut rabbit strip can be easily tucked under the wide end of the cone in finishing the fly.