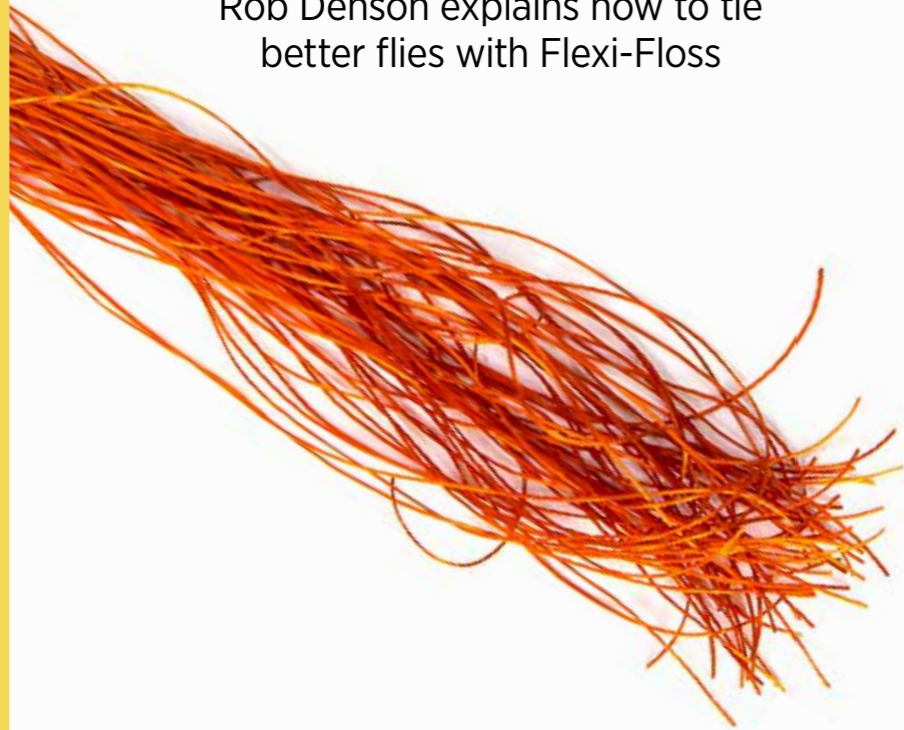


{ MATERIAL OF THE MONTH }

# FULL STRETCH

Rob Denson explains how to tie better flies with Flexi-Floss



**L**IKE MANY SYNTHETIC FLY-TYING materials, Flexi-Floss (or Spanflex – call it what you will, they are trade names for very similar products) originated in the textile and clothing industries, but it wasn't long before its unique and desirable properties were spotted and exploited by innovative fly materials companies. Stretching over five times its relaxed state, obvious uses are ribbing and creating bodies, but it has a few more nifty tricks. It moves in a very natural and tempting manner when lengths are tied to a pattern as appendages that pulse and flap irresistibly in the slightest current or breeze. It comes in a huge range of colours for easy hatch-matching and is also extremely robust, durable, and easy to work.

My favourite feature of Flexi-Floss, though, is its translucency, which allows it to transmit (let light and colour shine through) rather than reflect light. Nearly all invertebrates on the trout's menu are translucent and transmit light, therefore imitating this not only looks natural, but catches the eye and can be a key factor in how well your offering is received.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ROB DENSON

## DARK OLIVE BUZZER

Stretched to within an inch of its life, the Flexi-Floss body of this threadless buzzer clings to the hook under its own tension. A short length of orange Flexi-Floss forms the wing buds, then a spot of ink and two coats of varnish seals the deal. A festival of translucency! Just add water, light and fish.



## APP'S WORM

The work of the devil to some; innovative and imitative to others. The App's Worm divides, but there's no debate about its fish-catching prowess. This clever bloodworm imitation makes the most of the best features of Flexi-Floss: movement, translucency and durability, resulting in a fiendishly successful, classic pattern.



## JELLY BEAN BUZZER

Clear Flexi-Floss lets the light flood through this Jelly Bean Buzzer, creating an impressionistic delight. Double-wound (down to the rear end then back to the head) in touching turns, a spot of red ink and two coats of varnish add up to much more than the sum of its parts. It has limitless potential for buzzer patterns, or as a base for nymphs, wet-flies, dry-flies and emergers.



## KLINK

Waterproof, bombproof and practically weightless, varnished Flexi-Floss is a fantastic ribbing choice for dry-flies and emergers. Choose between ribbing over a thread base, tinsel or even a bare hook for a mind-bending number of tempting combinations.



## OLIVE NYMPH

If App's Worms aren't your thing, then maybe this naturalistic nymph fits the bill? Translucent cock hackle, seal's fur and Flexi-Floss combine perfectly to give this olive nymph a lovely back-lit glow, making it difficult to tell from the real thing.



## DADDY

Is there anything more annoying than spending hours knotting pheasant tail legs only for them to get chewed off after a fish or two? Spanflex solves the durability issue with the bonus of tantalising movement and translucency. Knotted in seconds, too! ■



**ROB DENSON** has fly-fished for trout for 25 years, visiting all four corners of Britain and Ireland, combining his love of fly-tying, photography and a rolling wave. Web: [robdenson.co.uk](http://robdenson.co.uk)

## PREPPING



Making your first purchase of Flexi-Floss can be confusing due to the dizzying array of available colours. A small selection of six or so colours won't break the bank and you can always add to your collection later. Here's my must-have six: olive, ginger, red, orange, clear and black.

Tying in is child's play, and much the same as tying in tinsel: with sharp scissors, snip a shallow angle on to the end of your section and catch it in with tight thread wraps. The "step" can be minimised by stretching the Flexi-Floss gently after each of the first few thread wraps.



Be sure to store your hanks of Flexi-Floss in the packet provided. It can be tempting to throw them all in a box or bag together, but this is asking for trouble. Dye will often migrate from one hank to another where they touch, causing staining and discolouration.