

— TROUT FLY OF THE MONTH —

BARE HARE

Rob Denson ties a fly that is deadly on, and in, the surface



Hook Size 12-18 Kamasan B170 or any suitable light/medium-wire hook
Thread UTC 70 - "brown olive"
Body Hare's ear and grey or fox squirrel mix

SOME FLIES are so cunningly simple yet devilishly effective they just make you grin. Some flies make a mockery of our clever little ideas and pet theories. Some just make you wonder why you've spent thousands over the years amassing enough fly-tying materials to justify employing a full-time curator. This month's offering does all those things, but mostly it just catches fish - and lots of them. Some days I wonder why I ever even countenance using anything else.

Back in the early '90s, I was bitten badly by the minimalist bug. On the rivers, I had just discovered the virtues of last month's offering - the Griffith's Gnat - which took the first bite, and, to borrow a phrase, opened my eyes to "what trout want". Similarly, over on the stillwater side of things, I was being drawn to the work of people such as Bob Barden, John White and Dave Shipman, and their lean, mean, simple nymphs, dry-flies and emergers. The exact provenance of this month's fly - the Bare Hare - escapes me, but I'm pretty sure it was simply a manifestation of the ideas that were coming to my attention. What I can remember is the very first time I cast the Bare Hare, on the Burnsall stretch of Yorkshire's River Wharfe.

A calm, balmy July morning had the trout up on the fin and feeding hard in the early morning sunshine as I tackled up, quivering with anticipation. My favourite pool reflected blues and greens on its slow, glassy surface, and dimpled with rise after rise, seemingly between each and every blink of the eye. I had not the foggiest notion what was on the menu, but felt, somehow, that the Bare Hare would be if I presented it as an option. I did, and it was. The hour or so that followed was truly magical and will live long in the memory. Solitude, sunshine,



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and trout on the dry-fly. That's what we want.

What trout want - what they really, really want - is food, lots of it, and they tend not to think too long or hard before opening their mouths to inhale a morsel. Browsing menus and making informed decisions doesn't fill stomachs - competition from kith and kin, and evasive action from their prey see to that. Counting tails, turns of rib, and colour-matching takes time - a scarce commodity in the trout's world. To fashion a passable likeness of any of the trout's prey items is almost always all that is needed. With a little thought and the right materials, deconstruction of a prey item to its most basic components results in the embodiment of the essence of that prey item in a way that overly complicated, close-copy flies fail to do.

Like other flies I have written about on this page - Deer Hair emerger, Grizzle Mink and Griffith's Gnat - the Bare Hare is yet another fly that was designed and tied for, and impressed me first, on the river, but has subsequently proved its worth on stillwater. All four operate in very different ways, working either in, on or partly under the surface film. The Bare Hare works on and in the surface, providing a choice for trout when emergers, adults and terrestrials struggle on the surface. It also completes a quartet of dry-flies/emergers that I would not contemplate leaving home without. **T&S**

TYING TIPS

- The original incarnation was tied exclusively with hare's ear/mask fur. I now mix roughly 50:50 with grey and/or fox squirrel to introduce a wider variety of tones, and give a little extra bugginess.
- Usually when dubbing a fly body, it is a good idea to use less than you think you will need. For the Bare Hare, though, be generous, build up a good fat body, then thin down to the desired bulk using a velcro patch.