

Rob Denson's trout fly of the month

Skinny Fergie Buzzer



Hook Size 8-16 Kamasan B170 or B175
Rib Fine flat tinsel – gold or silver
Over-rib (optional – omitted here) fine red wire
Body Olive tying thread
Cheeks Jungle cock with varnish/resin over



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AS WE enter winter proper, we enter the time of year where, in terms of fly-fishing for trout, I have not the faintest idea what I'm talking about. It's an awfully long time since my basic human urges to keep warm and dry were ignored and overridden by the urge to catch a few fish. I tried it, once – it was cold and wet – and I didn't like it. I tried fishing for grayling once, too; twice maybe. I didn't like it. Over the next couple of months, then, or until the weather warms sufficiently for me to have any confidence in the flies I show you and the words I write, I'd like to take the opportunity to show you a fly or two originated by some of my fishing friends.

First, then, I give you a simple but very effective Buzzer from the vice of my good friend Alex Ferguson, from Leicester. Alex is nicely positioned within easy striking distance of all the Midlands reservoirs, where he spends the bulk of his season, and indeed where this month's Buzzer was developed. We fish together several times each season and barely a week goes by without flies, thoughts and ideas on tying and fishing being exchanged. Alex has a very pragmatic and fuss-free approach to fly-tying, and produces flies of unique beauty. They usually work, too, and in the time I've known Alex, his flies and approach to tying in general have come to be a huge influence on my own tying.

Buzzer pupa patterns are among the simplest of all fly patterns. Somewhat paradoxically, though, fly-tyers the world over, but especially the British, seem to spend more time and effort trying to produce the perfect Buzzer than with almost any other family or type of fly. And there's nothing wrong with that. Putting your own stamp on any fly breeds confidence, and confident anglers catch fish. However, while many tyers are looking for that magic "trigger" or irresistible material that provides a reason be eaten, Alex focuses on form and function. For me, the success of the SFB is due largely not to what it has, but what it doesn't have: reasons to be refused. Oddly, the latter is invariably sacrificed in pursuit of the former. Then again, paradoxically, it can be the most difficult attribute to achieve. Alex regularly achieves this, and despite its simplicity the SFB manages, thanks to a couple of inlaid jungle-cock nails, to look just that little bit different and that little bit special. The fish think so, too. On its inaugural season three years ago, I witnessed its efficacy first hand when Alex and I took to Grafham Water in May, in search of Grafham's finest buzzer-feeders. We found them. Alex found more of them than I did – about 20 more – and I'd had a good dozen. I'll leave you to do the maths.

TYING TIPS

■ Alex's original was tied on light-to medium-wire hooks such as the B170 for versatility. For me, though, it's the perfect tail fly for a cast of three or four Buzzers, so mine are tied on the slightly heavier B175.

■ The jungle-cock inlay is perfectly achievable, if a little fiddly, with varnish or good-quality nail polish. It is therefore the perfect opportunity to get out your UV resin and make short work of the task. Alex's originals used UV resin.

■ Use a flat tying thread such as UTC to build up a smoother body.



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