

Bo Diddley

Try this fine spring pattern where there are emerging buzzers, writes *Rob Denson*

TYING TIPS

- Pay attention to keeping the fly slim: not too many tippetts, not too much seal's fur, and only two or three turns of hackle.
- As always with seal's fur patterns, give the fur a little rake with velcro to give it more life.
- George Barron has recently added a golden pheasant topping over the tippet tail — worth a go in brighter weather.



Hook Size 10-14 Kamasan B170 or B175 **Thread** Black **Butt** Flat silver **Tail** Golden pheasant tippetts **Rib** Silver wire or fine oval **Body** Red seal's fur **Shoulder hackle** Badger hen **Cheeks** Jungle cock splits **Head** Black

tweaks added along the way. The starting point was an Irish standard: the Red Arrow wet-fly. George was given a variant by his friend, Freddie Steele. George tweaked the tweak, and that's the version you see here. George has further tweaked the BD since this iteration, adding a sooty olive seal's fur thorax. I have stuck with the one pictured as it has worked so well for me. George's final version, along with dozens of other superb patterns, is featured in his book, *At the End of the Line*.

Anyway, the fishing. Conditions and hatches will dictate tactics and positioning. In calm weather and good buzzer hatches, a simple straight-line buzzer fishing approach — floating line with slim, shiny, smooth Buzzers — will usually be your opening gambit. However, if fish are high in the water and feeding in the top few inches on emerging fly, then changing the top dropper for a BD can be a shrewd move. The relative chaos of the BD represents the emerging fly well, complete with shuck and gas (silver butt), haemoglobin flush (red seal's fur) and kicking appendages (hackle). The odd lift of the rod or a burst of figure-of-eight retrieves are minor tactics worth trying.

When the wind picks up and straight-lining become tricky, it's time to replace the skinny Buzzers with wet-flies and Spiders or a combination thereof. The BD is equally happy at either end of the leader; my first choice being on the top dropper with slimmer wet-flies or Spiders beneath, or on the tail if bushier flies or Muddlers are being deployed above it.

All scenarios will be encountered during a week on loughs Corrib and Mask, which is where George takes his BDs every spring in search of Irish gold. I can tell you from my own exploits closer to home that the BD works just as well on rainbows and British brown trout from Harray to Bewl; just two waters where the BD has played a damn good tune. [TRS](#)



ROB DENSON

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CAST YOUR MIND BACK a few months to the Peter Ross Spider (*T&S* Autumn 2019). I tried my best to switch those who doubt the Peter Ross on to my variant. If my efforts were wasted and you still don't get it, maybe this is the fly for you.

I first came across the Bo Diddley (BD) ten years ago when Welsh tyer George Barron sent me a few flies to photograph. The BD reminded me instantly of the Peter Ross and therefore had great potential as a versatile spring pattern, particularly when big buzzers are on the menu. It came as no surprise to hear that George recommends the BD from March to May, covering buzzers, the Irish duckfly (buzzers large enough for ducks to pick off) and the first olives. If you're heading west this spring, board the ferry without a few of these in your box at your peril. As well as being photogenic (the original picture is used here), it's a great fish-catcher — two features true of all George's flies — and I commend it to your box.

The BD has morphed from a well-known pattern after being passed around among friends with