

PSEUDO HACKLE BOOBY

Rob Denson transforms a sacrificial fly into a fish-taker

MATERIALS

Hook Size 10-14 Kamasan B160,
170 or 175 **Thread** Black **Tail** Grizzle cock
Body hackle Hareline Pseudo Hackle
Eyes Black foam



IT'S AT LEAST TEN YEARS SINCE

I became aware of Pseudo Hackle, an interesting, affordable and useful material that has given me two exceptional patterns (see also the Pseudo Hackle nymph, *T&S* October 2017).

The Pseudo Hackle Booby is basically the nymph with a couple of booby eyes thrown on the front. The nymph was getting so much attention when fished on a dropper as part of a washing-line set-up that “boobyfying” it seemed logical. It is said that the booby’s place at the end of a washing line is sacrificial, there to hold the cast high in the water rather than to take fish itself. That’s fine, but I see no harm in making the booby more takeable to feeding fish. Scale down the hook and eye size and approach the body as we would a nymph or wet-fly.

A size 12 will hold the average three-fly cast (booby and two droppers on 5lb-8lb leader) sufficiently high in the water for a long and slow retrieve — the classic washing line is all about tempting fish scoffing nymphs and buzzers high in the water; we’re not ripping the flies back to provoke a reaction. If fishing three small flies on light hooks and a light leader, then a size 14 booby can attract lots of attention. Conversely, if you like a four-fly cast, heavier leader material and heavyweight

hooks, then scale up the size of the eyes and hook.

Paying close attention to all these variables, plus the choice between floating line or intermediates of varying sink rates, gives very fine control over the depth at which the flies are presented — either at a constant depth; or following a slight curve, therefore covering a range of depths, say 6in to 12in. Practice and experimentation are vital.

With its quiet demeanour and simple, nymphy, buggy looks, far from repelling alert feeding fish, the Pseudo Hackle Booby fits right in with the rest of the cast from March to the end of the season. I more or less limit myself to three boobies nowadays, and this is one of them; the others being the Cat, and Black and Red. Try the Pseudo Hackle Booby and I can pretty much guarantee you’ll get almost as much action to the booby as the nymphs. ■