

Foam Beetle

A basic foam beetle is a fly that belongs in every trout or panfish angler's box. They are easy to tie and durable, and they often fool large fish that aren't taken in by grasshopper imitations late in the summer.

How to Fish

Because they are small and hard to see even with a bright strike indicator, foam beetles are poor choices in fast water and at longrange. They excel when fishing gentle streams at short range. You can either target individual trout or blind-cast to likely holding water. Since beetles are terrestrial insects, undercut banks and overhanging limbs and grass stems make good targets. If you're not fishing to a particular fish, rig a beetle as a dropper behind a grasshopper. A trout will sometimes rise to the grasshopper, reject it as a fake, then sip the unassuming little beetle floating along behind the hopper, even if it wouldn't have bothered coming up to the beetle on its own. Foam beetles also work well on high-elevation lakes, since many lightweight terrestrials are caught in updrafts and blown into these infertile, cold environments.

Tying Challenges

Foam beetles are easy and quick to tie, both reasons why I produce something like a hundred dozen for sale every year. The only common problems are cutting the foam by tightening the thread too fast and crowding the eye when securing the foam strip to create the shell and head.

Pattern

Hook: standard dry fly, #14-18

Thread: black 8/0

Shell: black 2mm foam strip, tied in at the back and pulled over the body, then secured behind the eye

Underbody: peacock herl

Head: end of shell strip trimmed to a round shape

Indicator: slip of bright foam tied in at the head

Tying notes: Feel free to vary colors and underbody materials as you see fit. Black and peacock is only the most popular color combination.

