

The Fly Tier's Vice

The Zebra Midge

Submitted by Greg Chester

Hook Size 16 Tiemco 2487 or equivalent

Bead Silver, 3/32" diameter

Thread Black 6/0 Unithread

Wire Silver, small



Often the most effective fly pattern for the situation at hand is unfortunately the most difficult to tie to properly represent the trout's current bug of choice. But fear not, here's a winner that can be fished year round in streams and lakes and can't be much easier to tie – the venerable Zebra Midge. It's depicted here in black with a silver bead and silver wire, but can be tied in a variety of color combinations to satisfy the pickiest trout. Red, grey and olive are great alternatives.

It can be effectively fished as a dropper under a dry fly or rigged with split shot and bounced along the streambed under an indicator, perhaps in tandem with another nymph of some sort. For lakes it can be fished like any other chironomid, either dead still just off the bottom or very slowly inched along next to weeds or other structure.

In addition to modifying colors you can also dress up the fly with, say, single strands of crystal flash as a tail, a few turns of soft hackle or a tuft of dubbing or zelon behind the bead, or even painted beads. The combinations are nearly limitless; however don't underestimate how effective the basic Zebra can be tied just as shown.

With winter coming, stock up your box with this winner. Good tying and good fishing!