
FLY OF THE MONTH

The Newport Special by Jerrold Shelton

Hook: Partridge JS Sea Streamer Grey Shadow, size 10 or 8
Thread: Danville Flat Waxed Nylon #503 chartreuse
Tail: Gherke's Fish Fuzz, "Dolphin Yellow", aka chartreuse, tied in long and trimmed back to give the fly a finished length of 2 inches
Body: J. Fair's long "Shuck", fluorescent chartreuse
Eyes: Spirit River I-Balz, 5/32 gold
Cement: Zap-A-Gap



The Newport Special isn't really all that special, being little more than a no-hackle Crystal Bugger with metallic eyes attached at the head in the Clouser Minnow style. It was developed specifically for drift-trolling in the pursuit of sand bass and halibuts in shallow coastal embayments. It is relatively small and slender, making it appear non-threatening and easy to kill. It was designed to maintain light contact with the bottom, skating, tumbling, and semi-rolling along with a tail-up attitude, thus mimicking the behavior of a burrowing shrimp. The light gauge wire hook keeps the overall weight down and concentrated toward the head, and is critical to getting the right action. It also penetrates deeper and faster than a typical "salt water" hook. It is most effective when drift-trolled or fished with long, slow pulls in cast and retrieve situations. Leaders need to be 3X or lighter for best results, as stiffer

leaders limit the ability of the fly to respond naturally to underwater current. It goes together back to front, just like the Woolly Bugger that it basically is. When I attach the eyes, I allow the eyes to "invade the headspace", and form a mirror-image head with the tying thread behind the eyes, which tapers from front to back. This makes the head more hydrodynamic; instead of the eyes pushing water around the Shuck body, the water moves through it. I whip finish on this mirror-image head. Other materials may be substituted for the tail, but none that I've tried have the same seductive wiggle that the Fish Fuzz does when wet. This fly has accounted for catches of barred sand bass and spotted sand bass, halibuts, yellowfin croakers, corbinas, surf-perch, mackerel, barracudas, bonitos, bat rays, cutlassfish, sculpins, white sea bass, leopard sharks, and smooth hound sharks, among others. - Jerrold

