



Spring Creek Flycraft and Guide Service

California Guide License No. 2917

Bill Carnazzo
5209 Crestline Drive, Foresthill, CA 95631
630 S. First St., Dunsmuir CA 96025
(530) 367-5209 (Foresthill)
(916) 295-9353 (Cell Phone)
(530) 235-4048 (Dunsmuir)

Fly Tyers Corner January, 2013 Jimmy Legs Stonefly Nymph

by **Bill Carnazzo**

The big, ugly Jimmy Legs fly is the very definition of "motion" as it cruises through the water column. The legs are, I'm sure, the strike trigger for hungry trout during spring stonefly hatches. Hot on the tail of my own Stick Caddis pattern (but still behind), this bug has, in the last few years, brought big numbers of large canyon trout to the net. It can be tied in black for the "salmon fly" (Pteronarcys) hatch; in an amber shade for the Golden Stonefly hatch; and in various other colors for other species. I'm constantly reminded that clean, pocket-water streams with plenty of dissolved oxygen are home to stoneflies all year long, and fish will eat them even during other insect hatches.

For this reason, my canyon boxes always contain Jimmy Legs Stonefly Nymphs in various colors and sizes. The fly is bonehead easy to tie and utilizes simple, inexpensive, and readily available materials. One quirky point, from a fly tyer's viewpoint, is that you will either need to buy a specialty hook—one that has a downward bend in the shank at about the front 1/3 point—or bend a regular streamer hook yourself. Another factor in tying this fly is weight—it's a grenade, sporting a shank covered with .015 weight wire (I prefer the non-lead variety).

In canyon water, I use this fly on a short-line rig in two situations: swiftly flowing, stream-swelling spring melt flows that deepen summertime's shallow spots; and the occasional deep slot or pool found between shallower pocket water stretches. In both of these situations, I don't hesitate to off the small tidbits and bend on a big morsel such as a Jimmy Legs. I've seen many an angler exhibit reluctance to do so just because it is "trouble" and consumes time. That can be a big mistake because in canyon streams, those places are where the largest specimens abide.

A final point regarding choice of chenille and leg material color: In my experience, the medium brown chenille color combined with olive/rust Flex-Floss material, works best overall. Variegated chenille in brown/yellow and dark olive/black colors also work well. Why use Flex-Floss instead of solid rubber leg material? I recently read that the transparency of the former material, together with the motion it creates, are the strike triggers. That sounds credible enough to me. The tail and antennae are not knotted, while the four legs that protrude from the body are indeed knotted. An excellent U-Tube video tying demonstration for the Jimmy Legs can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgC4cp64N70>.

To be productive, the fly must drift close to the bottom, since that's generally where stoneflies are located, whether scurrying about on the rocks, or caught up in the drift.

Materials list

Hook	Dai Riki 700B bent-shank hook; or any heavy streamer hook bent to shape, #6-10	Tail	Olive/rust Flex-Floss or similar product (not knotted)
Thread	Brown or dark olive 6/0 or 140 denier flat nylon	Legs	Same as tail, but pre-knotted
Weight	.015 weight wire, wound around the shank beginning at the hook point and continuing up the shank to about 2 eye-widths behind the hook eye	Body	Brown, medium size chenille, or other color of choice
		Antennae	Same as tail

Tying Instructions

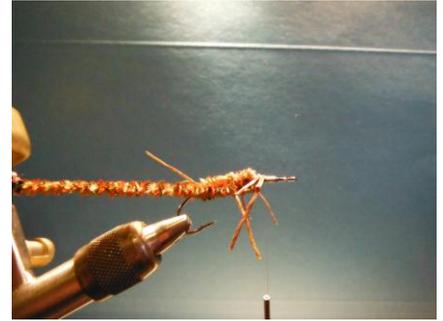
- Let's prepare a bit for this pattern; it will save time and save you some stress. First, cut enough Flex-Floss strands for a half dozen flies; for this, you will need 12 leg pieces (we will cut these in half), and 6 pieces for antennae and tails (we will also cut these in half). Second, unless you have purchased a specialty hook, de-barb six standard 2x or 3x long streamer hooks and bend each of them downward a bit at about the 1/3 point behind the hook eye. Third, cut six pieces of chenille, each 4" long. Finally, cut the Flex-Floss leg pieces in half, and tie an overhand knot in each piece at about the 1/3 point, and cut the tail/antennae pieces in half. Set these aside for now.



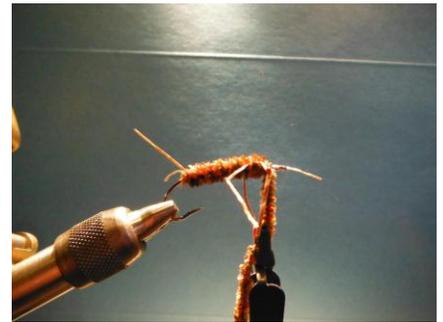
2. Place the debarbed and bent hook in your vise and cover the shank with .015 weight wire, beginning at the hook point and ending about 2 eye widths behind the hook eye.
3. Tie the thread onto the shank and cover the weight wire with a flat layer of thread, leaving the thread at the rear of the hook.
4. Wrap one of the tail/antennae Flex-Floss pieces around the thread, even up the ends, and tie this piece in at the back end of the shank. It should be placed so that it forms a "v" facing to the rear, and the two tails should be even in length.
5. Strip one end of a piece of chenille and tie it on in front of the tail. Wrap it once behind the tail, and then come forward with close, tight wraps to the point where the hook bends. Tie it off there but don't cut it off, just move it rearward and out of the way for the next step.



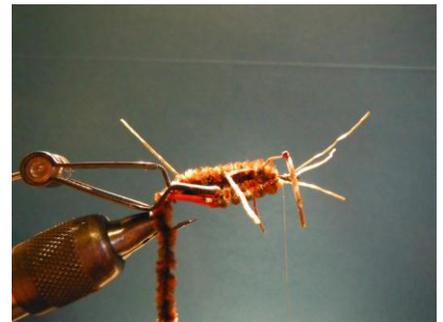
6. Tie in two of the knotted legs by placing them together on top of and perpendicular to the shank directly in front of the chenille, using a figure-eight technique. Straighten and even them after a few wraps and then add tightening wraps. Move the thread to the hook eye.



7. Wrap the chenille once behind the legs, and once between them to separate the pairs; then cross to the front of the legs and wrap once in front of them. Tie off the chenille again with a thread wrap or two, but don't trim it yet. You should now have a bit of space between the front of the chenille and the hook eye for the next step.



8. Wrap one of the tail/antennae Flex-Floss pieces around the thread, even up the ends, and tie this piece in directly behind the hook eye. It should be placed so that it forms a "v" facing to the front, and the two Antennae should be even in length. It's important to make sure that the Flex-Floss stays on top of the hook and doesn't move down the side of the shank.



9. Take a couple of wraps of chenille in front of the legs and behind the hook eye, and tie the chenille off. Whip finish, and add a tiny drop of superglue to the thread wraps. Don't get glue on the Flex-Floss, as it will cause the floss to kink and distort.



Don't drop one of these on your big toe—they are heavy....

Enjoy, and see ya on the creek...!!!