

NEWSLETTER

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Expanding into New Waters

If there is one thing that excites a fly tier it's expanding their arsenal. This means one of a few things—learning new patterns, learning a new technique, or fishing new waters. For us here at Nature's Spirit it's expanding into a new type of product, that product being [Just Add H2O](#).

H2O is a company that came with the purchase of Fish Hunter, and we are happy it did. This company lives and breaths in synthetic fibers. Popular for products such as

slinky fibre, SF Blend, Fish Scale, and Polar Fibre, just to name a few. With all of their synthetic materials, they have quickly become the most popular material brand for saltwater flies. With both soft and stiff fibers, you have a large range of materials and styles to pick from with a large color selection in each material. You could take one baitfish pattern and tie it in so many colors, you could fish anywhere on the planet and only use that one pattern.



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Pattern: Stimulator CDC Variant

The saltwater fishery is not the only market this material has made a name in. Lately they have shown up in many of the larger streamer patterns for trout, bass, walleye, muskie, and pike. This brings on the point of why synthetics are becoming so popular in all fishing markets. They are made to be substitutes for natural materials, the most common being marabou and bucktail. Synthetics last longer and bring a new visual aspect such as translucency, which is hard to find in the natural world.



Now lets get to some of the products that we carry from H2O. We are going to go over some of the popular materials that have earned a shout out, a few that have really started catching the eyes of fly tiers, and some that we have added to our list for this coming tying season.

Popular Products of H2O

The Popular materials from H2O need no introduction. The SF Blend, Fish Scale, Fluoro Fibre, and Polar Fibre are among them. These materials each have a their own uses and applications, and that's what we are here to talk about.

Polar Fibre

Polar Fibre is a marabou replacement. It is close to craft fur but softer and finer than select craft fur and averages 3 inches in length. Its applications are relatively simple in tails and wings like marabou, yet due to its make-up and ability to hold shape with its movement, you have a larger selection of patterns were you can use it. Marabou is a great natural material for bulk, color, and movement. You can also get slim patterns by using small amounts as well, making it a very versatile natural feathers. That's why there are so many synthetics trying to replace it, and that's why Polar Fibre is one of the top go-to replacements with craft fur.



Polar Fibre Intruder

Synthetics do a better job at keeping shape in smaller amounts than marabou. For example Polar Fibre makes a great baitfish pattern on its own with out any supporting material and sheds water very well. Marabou when used to make the same pattern will slick down, and soaks up water becoming heavy to cast. Marabou also needs some type of support to keep its bulk consistent when being used in applications other than a tail. Like for a wing or collar marabou needs something to hold it up to create bulk, where as Polar Fibre does not. Now that does not mean Polar Fibre is superior to marabou, but some of its applications are better suited for specific tying situations.

SF Blend

SF Blend is the number one product from H2O in popularity. With its large color range (46 in regular & 32 in UV in our stock) and structure as a bucktail replacement, it has really taken a hold in the salt water fisheries. It is a kinked fiber that averages 9 inches in length and has angel hair-like flash mixed into it. For decades, bucktail was the top baitfish material and is still used by all for the same patterns. Its natural taper, stiffness, and length is unmatched by any other natural product. Where SF Blend takes over is its length and appearance.

Lets be honest. One of the hardest things to find is a bucktail with great length for large predatory flies. They are very popular and in short supply. SF blend is also consistent in its kink, length, and durability. Where it has an advantage is its appearance. You know that saying "less is more" when it comes to building larger flies. Nothing is truer to that statement than SF Blend. Because of the wavy kink and stiffness it keeps shape in the water but also creates bulk without much material.

To go with the statement "less is more" - having less material for a bulky fly adds a transparent look to it. Add in the fact that a large portion of the colors have a natural translucent appearance to them, and you get something a natural bucktail can't offer. Another advantage is the ability to shed water. Shedding water for a large fly is important when you're casting it all day long. Water-logged flies are a pain to cast and become tiresome after a period of time. This is the benefit of having a material that creates bulk with little material needed.



Anil's Shock & Awe with SF Blend and Pink Fluoro Fibre

Fish Scale

Fish Scale is a crimped nylon with krystal flash mixed into it, providing a scale look in the midst of the tying material. This is perfect for baitfish patterns both big and small. Not meant to be as bulky as SF Blend, this material makes more streamline baitfish patterns with ease. You can Spread out the material for a flat and deep baitfish, or keep it slim for a sandlance or candle fish imitation. Fish scale also works well in tandem with SF blend, using it as a color base to go over top of the fly, or give your fly a lateral line by using it in the middle of the pattern. For example: Take Anil Srivastava's Shock & Awe made from White and Chartreuse SF blend and you get a great coho fly. Adding a little bit of pink or blue fish scale in the middle of the fly creates a trigger point for when base color combinations may not be working.



Fish Scale sandlance

Fluoro Fibre

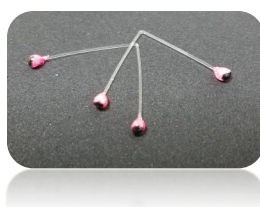
Fluro Fibre is more of a specific material when it comes to its applications. It's a shorter microfiber, perfect for adding gill or lateral lines in a fly. Although it has similar uses as Fish Scale and is not as long, Fluro Fibre gets its advantage by being a fluorescent material. It makes its name by providing a splash of color in a pattern without adding any flash. A popular material for making throats on baitfish patterns like Lefty's Deceiver.

Materials To Try

When it comes to material to try, these are products that we have seen peek a lot of interest in tiers. All though more unique and refined in their uses, they may fit a knitch somewhere in an selection of flies you tie.

Shrimp & Crab Eyes

Now everyone has a selection of shrimp and crab eyes to pick from. Most of them are mono with a large ball on the end either made from mono or epoxy. Usually painted or left in a natural state. Many fisherman make their own to fit their preferences and specifications in color and size. Where H2O's Shrimp and Crab Eyes steal the podium from any other eye is their appearance. The natural is like any other being solid black and coming in two different sizes, while the 4 colors are a different story.



The color selection, although small compared to most materials, is rather impressive when you compare them to other shrimp and crab eyes. These are not painted but dyed in a way that adds translucency to the eye. They have a black pupil and added glitter to give some flash. What



Thomas Lamphere's Drunken Shrimp
Purple/blue w/ Chartreuse Shrimp eyes

really adds to the eyes themselves is that they are fluorescent causing them to reflect more light than any other shrimp or crab eye. Want an example for a perfect way to use them? Tie a darker prawn pattern for swinging steelhead and put one of these bright eyes on to give it not only life, but a bright spot to stare back at the fish and scream BITE ME!

Another nice advantage is these eyes are hinged. They are not a single eye, but one piece that is bent in half with an eye on each end of it. This adds a securing advantage by having the ability to tie them in for length, and then fold it over to have both eyes showing. This locks them in by the hinge, helping to keep them from getting ripped off by hungry fish.

Rainbow Plastic Dumbbells

These are something special. H2O took their 3D eyes and turned them into a mono-linked dumbbell. This provides a fly tier option for their streamers with being virtually weightless. Ranging from 4-12mm in size, you have that realistic fish eye look without having to try to glue a single eye in place. These are also very easy to stack material around for any kind of deer hair or dubbing head.



Mirror Image

Mirror image is a denser material that has more uses than just a classic baitfish pattern. This product has a cotton candy texture, and is also a translucent material coming only in pale colors. This is where it differs from other material, it can be used for a thicker and denser baitfish while staying light in color—much like a fish that is using light as its own camouflage. But one advantage to Mirror Image that other products don't have is the shrimp and crab patterns that can be tied with it. This material stacks and trims with ease for simple crab patterns. With its thin-but-dense properties, it flairs out when stacked together for a body. To go even further with this product, H2O came out with Deadly Dazzle which is Mirror Image mixed with Super UV Flash. This gives you another option to the fly you're tying. Have a few without flash, and have a few with a UV enhancer for a bright scale affect, or mix them together in the same pattern.



Ghostfish with White Mirror image and Steelhead Grey Deadly Dazzle

New for the Fall Season

With so many great products from H2O, we could not help but add a couple more before the fall tying season. They are constantly coming out with new products that you can't help but take a hard look at. This is one company that we will continue to expand with in the future, and we would love any input you have on some of their products. For now we decided to include these new products into our fall season.

Nymph dubbing Brush



These Nymph Dubbing Brushes are quite unique. Made from H2O's original translucent fibers, these short fiber brushes are rather versatile. They come in a decent color range for any nymph pattern you wish to tie, but also work for small leach or bugger bodies, making a perfect dubbing or chenille replacement. Package wise, the Nymph Dubbing Brushes come with 10 brushes that are 6 inches long totaling in 60 inches of brush per pack.

The brushes are also rather dense, which, for a small nymph brush, is a nice advantage—not needing as much to cover up space and give color to your fly. Along with the small streamers you can tie, the grub and caddis patterns are irresistible when

tied with these brushes. Being made from a translucent fiber, they do not over power on color like other synthetic bug brushes.

Grizzly Fibre

Grizzly Fibre is a perfectly barred thin fiber used to give your fly definition. Mostly used for tails, wings, and lateral lines, this material is rather straight forward in its uses. Complimenting the Fish Scale in style, you can use them together and give a fly a lateral line that is barred and mixed with a little flash. Or use it on its own for a small baitfish imitating salmon/trout fly, giving natural looking parr marks to the pattern.



Just Add H2O is growing in our vendor line up very quickly, our goal with them is to be the go-to supplier for their synthetic materials. If there is any product that you find interesting that we do not carry, please feel free to let us know so we can take a good look at it. H2O is constantly coming out with new products and we are excited to see what they come out with next. For all other products that we carry from H2O please check out our website.

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