

## BONEFISH FLIES – CRAZY CHARLIE

Guide and lodge owner Charlie Smith is sometimes credited as the originator of the "Crazy Charlie." That's not quite correct... see below part of an interview by Ken Hanley (a California guide) with Bob Nauheim the person who created the fly...

Here's the story directly from Bob:

It took place on a bonefishing trip to the Bahamas. I believe it was around 1977. Keep in mind there really weren't many flyfisherman chasing bonefish at this time. I was working with a guide (and lodge owner) named Charlie Smith. We were watching the bones apparently key on glass minnows. I asked Charlie if that was a common food for bonefish and he replied "Sure mon."

That night, back in the lodge, I tied some flies with a bit of flash, some clear Mason 15 lb. Mono, a couple of feathers, and a pair of bead eyes. The eyes were adopted from steelhead patterns I'd used with great success. It was the first time bead eyes were used on a bonefish pattern.

The next day we had a ball catching fish with the newly created pattern. Charlie said "dat fly is nasty mon", that's when I gave it the name Nasty Charlie. I'd run into Lee Perkins, of Orvis fame, and he asked me about the fly design. He'd heard how effective it was on the flats. I sent him a sketch with tying instructions. Later that year it was presented in the Orvis Catalog as the "Crazy Charlie." It's had that name ever since. I'm delighted it's become such a widely accepted fly.

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### Materials:

Hook - Mustad 34007 or 3407 Stainless Steel saltwater  
size 1, 2, 4, 6, 8. 4 & 6 are the most common

Tail – extend body material approx ½ body length

Thread - standard is white, but match the body

Eyes - bead chain silver or brass, size to match desired sink rate

Body -

Nasty - Silver tinsel underbody, wrap w/15lb mono (vary underbody color tan is common)

Crazy - pearl flashabou underbody, wrap with clear vinyl v-rib. (again colors may vary..)

Wing-

Nasty - Saddle hackles, splay tips. White standard, varies

Crazy - calf tail approx 1.5 hook length White standard, varies

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### Steps:

1. Build a thread "saddle" for the eyes, add a drop of zap-a-gap or superglue on top



2. Figure-8 the eyes in, be sure to take a few horizontal wraps to lock them in.



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3. Tie in the tail, if you're using one, personally I like a sparse sparkly tail, but it seems to make little difference in function.
4. Tie in the underbody and ribbing (or mono) you want to thread wrap the bulky rib material along the full shank to avoid making a lumpy tail end...



5. Wrap the underbody forward to the eyes



6. and then the ribbing overbody



7. Invert the fly and tie in the wing



8. Finish off the head with head cement or other ...

### References:

Bonefish Fly Patterns, Dick Brown 2<sup>nd</sup> ed Lyons Press

Bonefishing!, Randall Kaufmann, Western Fishermans Press

“Estimates of bonefish burst speed is from 20 – 30 mph. In contrast, trout top out at 5 mph” Kaufmann.

It's a whole 'nother thing....

