

Eastern Fly Tying

Blue and White Temple Dog Tube Fly

By John Nagy



Materials

- Tube:** Large silver Eumer Teardrop brass tube and stiff plastic tube liner (0.07 inch outside diameter)
- Hook:** Partridge Nordic single tube fly hook, MM3STBN, size 8
- Thread:** White 12/0 Bennechi
- Tail:** Red or orange Fluoro Fiber
- Wing:** First layer (bottom to top), silver Angel Hair, white T's Hair (www.tboneflyfish.com) or bucktail, silver Fire Fly, stiff white saddle feather, silver Angel Hair; second layer (bottom to top), white temple dog fur, silver Fire Fly, stiff white saddle feather, blue Krinkle Mirror Flash; third layer (bottom to top), kingfisher blue T's Fur, peacock Fire Fly, kingfisher blue teal flank feather; fourth layer (bottom to top), dark blue T's Fur, peacock Fire Fly, black ostrich herl
- Cheek:** Jungle cock

Even though tube flies seem to be all the rage in the Great Lakes region, many steelheaders are still hesitant to add this innovative system to their fly boxes. To the uninitiated, a tube-fly pattern such as the Blue and White Temple Dog may seem more like a novelty or even a gimmick, until you realize the impressive inherent advantages of using a tube fly instead of conventional patterns.

Tube flies allow you to tie a large fly (on the tube body) and use a small hook (which is inserted into the rear of the tube). This big fly–small hook combination results in a dramatic increase in the percentage of hooked fish that are actually landed, because, during a battle with a big fish such as a steelhead, short-shank tube hooks do not bend and twist like long-shank hooks. (Long-shank hooks don't always hold their shape under duress, and they have inferior leverage compared with short-shank hooks, which means they are easily dislodged from a fish's mouth.) Also, because they are small, tube fly hooks are less injurious to fish.

Tube flies have a long fishing life because the fly normally disengages from the hook and slides up the leader during battle. This prevents the fly from being damaged by the fish's teeth and allows easy access for hook removal. Dull or damaged hooks are easily replaced on the stream without discarding the fly. Additionally, tube flies allow you to control the weight of the fly for various water flows by switching between plastic, metal, or combination-material tube bodies and by using cone heads or bead heads.

The Blue and White Temple Dog Tube Fly combines the innovation of a tube-fly design and the beauty and effectiveness of a Scandinavian Temple Dog–style wing (made from soft,

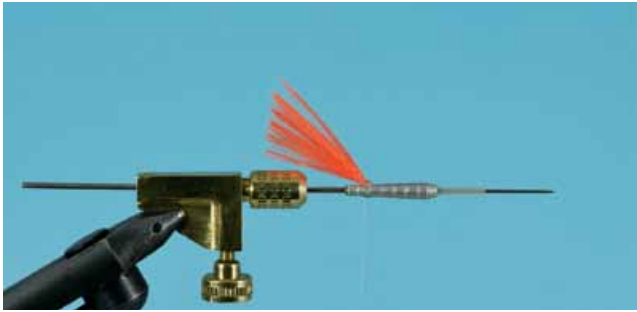
breathable materials mounted at a high angle to maximize profile and movement in the water).

These materials also allow for bulk and volume at the front of the wing, while the fly tapers nicely to form a pointed tail. The taper of the wing is formed by layering small amounts of hair, of different thicknesses and lengths, from bottom to top. Making the wing look

deceptively full is a simple matter of layering in flash material (Angel Hair, Fire Fly, or Krinkle Mirror Flash) that provides a delicate support structure for the primary wing material.

The translucent wing allows light penetration and reflection while absorbing little water. Small amounts of flash material add subtle reflection, color, and movement throughout the Temple Dog wing. The lightweight wing and the light-wire hook make this fly easy to cast—certainly far easier than conventional large steelhead flies dressed on standard hooks with bulky materials such as rabbit fur.

The silhouette of the wing and the movement provided by the soft wing materials with added jungle cock cheeks (suggesting eyes on a baitfish) make the Temple Dog fly very effective for imitating Great Lakes baitfish, and this blue-and-white pattern is an effective yet underappreciated color variation.



Step 1: Insert assembled tube body onto Eumer tapered tube pin (which can be directly secured into a Eumer tube tying tool or vise jaws). Tie a high-angle, 1-inch-long tail on the rear of the tube body (Super-Glue in place), leaving one-eighth-inch space for the junction tubing connection to be added later. Trim the tail to a tapered point. The long tail helps prevent the wing from getting tangled around the hook.



Step 4: Dress the third wing layer as follows: kingfisher blue T's fur (3.5 inches long), four strands of peacock Fire Fly, kingfisher blue teal flank feather.



Step 2: Assemble the first wing layer in the following order: six strands of silver Angel Hair, a small bunch of 1.5-inch-long white bucktail hairs, four strands of silver Fire Fly, stiff white saddle feather, six strands of silver Angel Hair. The wing layers are dressed at high angles. (Clean the bucktail with a dubbing brush before use.)



Step 5: Dress the fourth wing layer as follows: dark blue T's Fur (3.75 inches long), four strands of peacock Fire Fly, three or four black ostrich herl fibers (just under 4 inches long).



Step 3: Dress the second wing layer as follows: white temple dog fur (2.5 inches long), four strands of silver Fire Fly, stiff white saddle feather, four strands of blue Krinkle Mirror Flash. (Clean the temple dog fur with a dubbing brush before use.)



Step 6: Attach jungle cock eyes (slightly more than 1 inch long) angled up along the wing. Cut the remaining plastic liner (the portion in front of the head area) to approximately one-sixteenth-inch long, then use a lighter to melt the end of the liner to form a lip. Finish the head.

Two notes about the hook and the tube: I prefer the Partridge Nordic single tube fly hook, which I connect to the rear end of a Eumer (www.eumer.com) Teardrop tube by using 0.25 inch of clear vinyl or silicon junction tubing. To extend the hook farther behind the actual fly—and thereby eliminate short-striking fish—simply use a longer junction tubing con-

nection. Upon insertion into the Eumer tube, one end of the liner will snug against the rear of the Eumer tube. Leave at least 0.5 inch of liner in front of the tube for tying the fly.

John Nagy is a creative fly tier and the author of Steelhead Guide: Fly Fishing Techniques and Strategies for Lake Erie Steelhead.