



in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Many productive flies (for whichever species) have a handful of features in common. The Copper Clouser combines a balanced mix of imitative and attractor features. It is relatively easy to tie, has a good action in the water,

in various shapes, forms and colours is the norm here – but no matter how much varnish, Super Glue, or UV Knot Sense is applied, after the first couple of strikes the underlying thread over lead base is exposed. Here a copper wire-wrapped shank as body outdoes any tinsel. Applied

correctly over a layer of varnish, covering all tying thread and finished with another layer of varnish, it will last the lifetime of the fly. The copper wire shank aids in this fly's effectiveness by adding weight, improving durability and matching the colour of the natural baitfish which tigers commonly feed on.



TIGERFISH FODDER

Although tigerfish feed on a wide variety of baitfish, including robbers, barbs and minnows, it is the bulldog that this fly imitates most closely. The bulldog, *Marcusenius macrolepidotus*, is found in most river systems from the Nile down to the Pongola. They breed around submerged vegetation in the summer months – the floodplains of the Zambezi and Okavango providing a perfect area for this. Over the dry winter months, the floodwaters recede and immature bulldogs are forced from their shelter of floodplain vegetation into the main channel. They are poor swimmers and small specimens are swept downstream in the strong currents of the main

Above and right: Both nembwe and tigerfish of the Zambezi regularly fall prey to the Copper Clouser.

displays a great profile when wet, can be tied in different weights, and is fairly durable as far as tiger flies go. I will outline how these components contribute to the characteristics of this productive fly.

THE PARTS

The Copper Clouser is a simple Clouser to tie, and most fly fishermen will be left in no doubt as to the pedigree of this style of fly. Its weight is easily changed by different dumbbell eyes (brass, lead, tungsten etc.) and adding weight on the shank. The Clouser-style used contributes to the overall success of the Copper Clouser in the following departments: weight, action in the water, fly profile, and ease of tying. (If this sounds gibberish, search “Clouser fly” on Google immediately before continuing to read this or any other fly fishing article, for that matter.)

I prefer to wrap the shank of all Clousers that I tie for tiger flies. Tinsel

