

Bead Head Squirmey Wormey

By Steve Cullen

There are several, possibly dozens of videos on You Tube showing variants of the Squirmey Wormey. I've tied a lot of these flies and this particular tie has become my "go to" method. This fly is fished under an indicator and a fly that gets down to your intended target depth quickly is almost always preferred. This fly tied in the manner described here accomplishes that better than any I've found. It's also a very durable fly. I typically lose them well before they're too torn up to fish.

A word of caution here: These should be stored separately from your other flies, especially if they have synthetics. The silicone used in the manufacture of this material is extremely susceptible to reaction with other materials and may disintegrate if in contact for any length of time. I use a round plastic leader box. They don't seem to mind being stored together in my experience, so there's no need for neatly fixing them in a fly box. Additionally, they don't like a lot of heat. Keep your storage container out of the sun.

More than anything, I believe it's the action of the material that's hard for a fish to resist. Bead color for instance just doesn't seem to matter. I've used them all.

Drift this fly, occasionally jigging it a bit. And anticipate a possible strike at the end of the drift or on retrieval. I've had a lot of success before pickup, largely I think because of the extra imparted action.



Materials

Hook: Firehole 516 or 551 Jig Hook, Size 12, or any 60 degree jig hook of your choice (Can also be tied on a size 14)

Bead: 1/8" Tungsten slotted or countersunk bead. (Color of your choice)

Thread: 70 Denier ULTRA, (color to match Squirmey material)

Body: Silicone squirmey wormy material marketed under several names

Lead Wire: .015 (or Lead Free wire)

Thread the bead on the hook, contrary to conventional methodology, slot or countersunk hole first. (The reason will be self evident).

I like to use competition hooks for a couple of reasons. First, I fish barbless and this saves me the extra step of mashing down the barb. Second, they are extremely sharp, most having been chemically sharpened.

I also like to place the hook in my vise at a slightly upward angle to keep the thread from slipping off the eye.



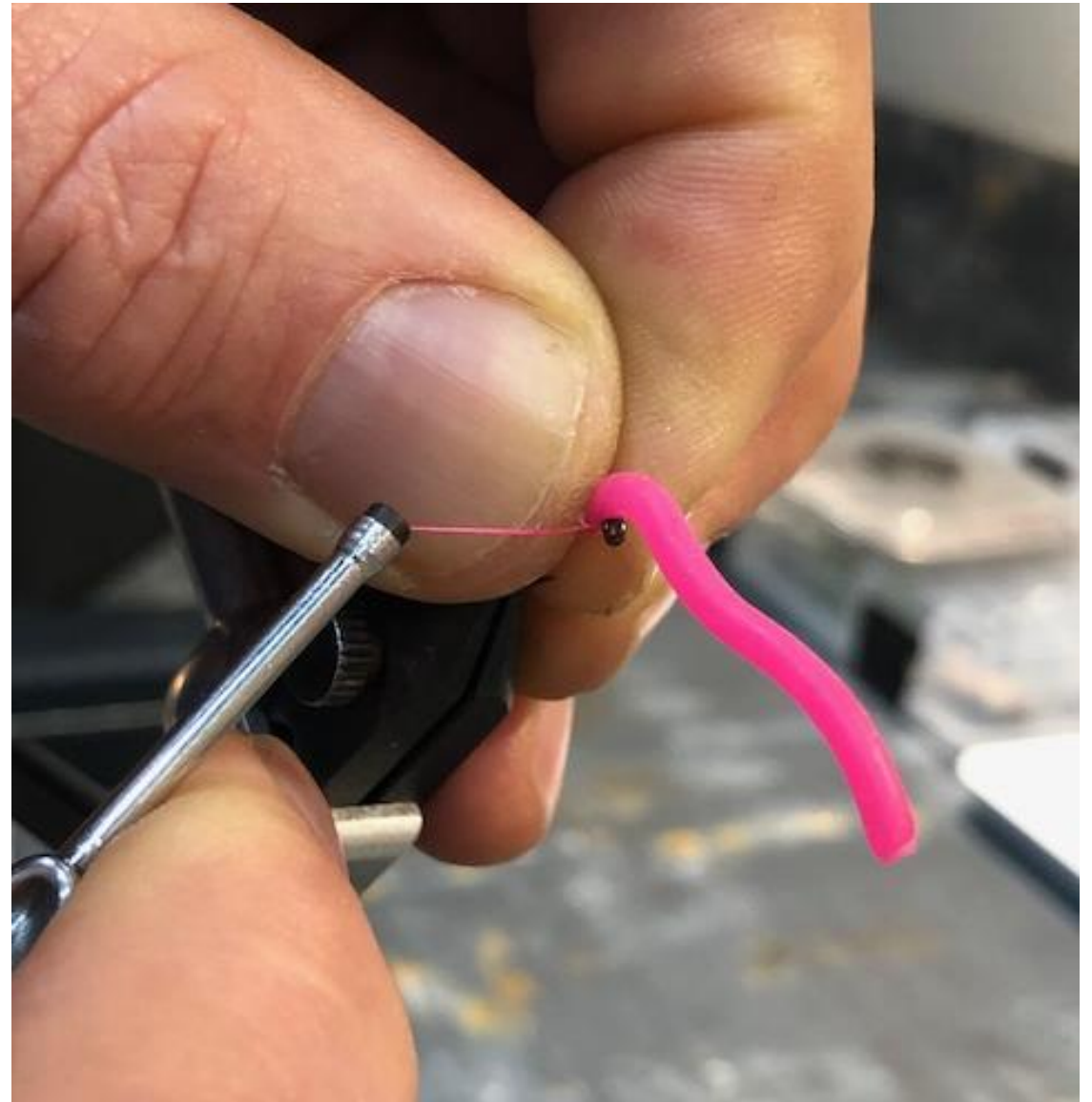
Start the thread immediately behind the eye of the hook and wrap back to just beyond the 60 degree bend and then back again. ONE WRAP IN EACH DIRECTION ONLY! Otherwise this just doesn't work.



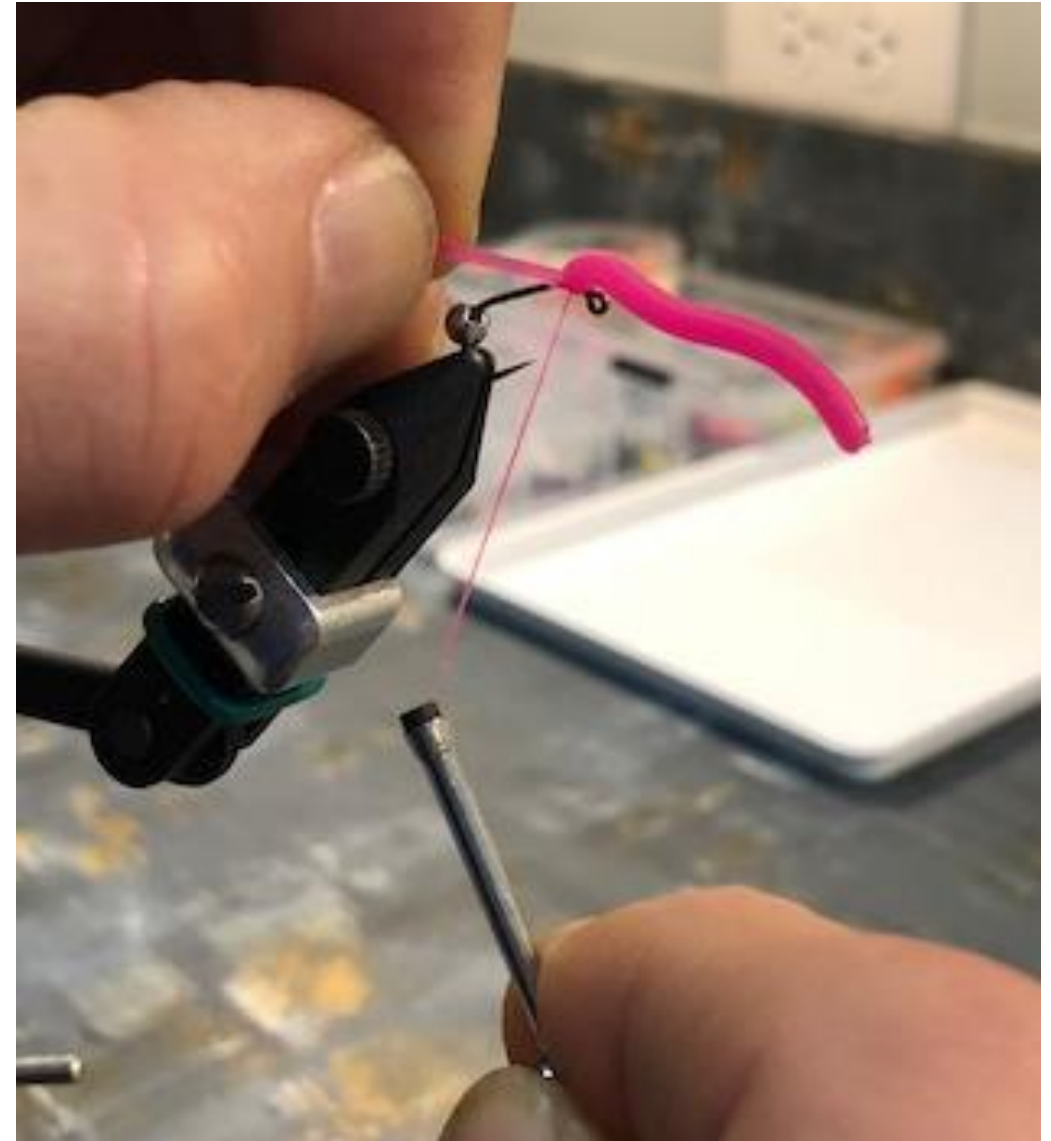
After removing a piece of the silicone material from the host, cut it into three equal length pieces. (You should get 1 1/2 flies out of each strand)



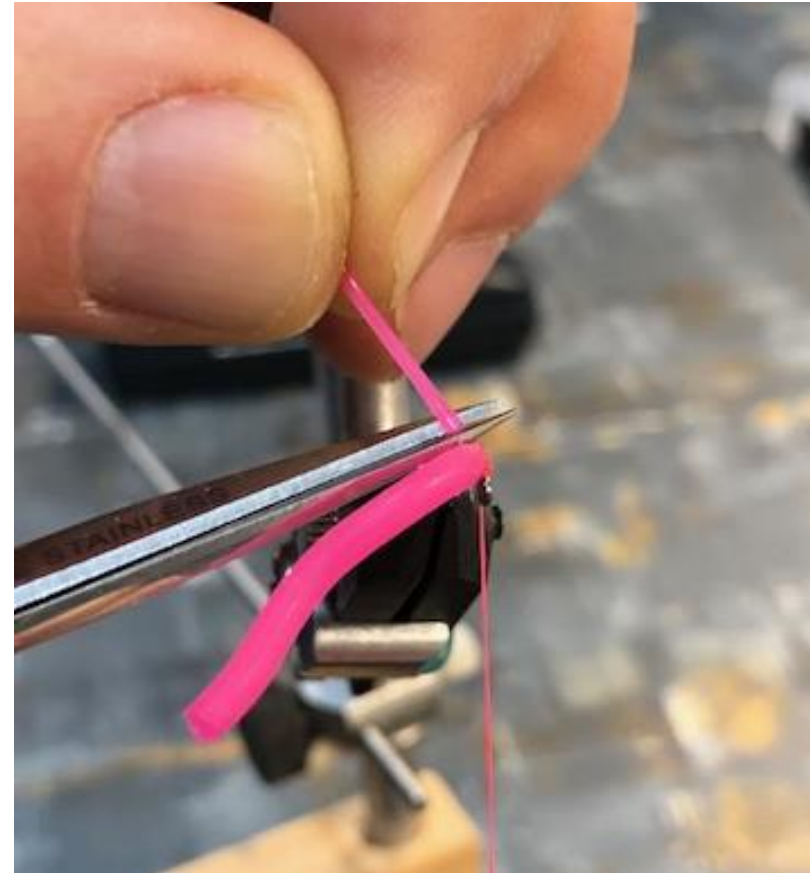
Pinching about 1/4" of the squirmey material, tie it in just behind the eye with 3 to 5 fairly tight wraps, being careful to keep the material directly on top of the hook. It helps if you keep your thread length to a minimum outside your bobbin.



After securing the silicone at the eye, while pulling the silicone tag end toward the bend of the hook, wrap the thread back over the silicone with tight wraps, stopping about 1/16" past the 60 degree bend.



Add a whip finish here, (one or two turns only), then grab the tag end of the silicone, pull back and snip off the excess.



Snip off your thread and now slide the bead up over the wraps you just made. If you're using a slotted bead rather than a countersunk bead, put the slot on the bottom of the hook. Just advance the bead to the beginning of the eye. It may be possible to push the bead further onto the eye, but don't. The silicone will help hold the bead off of the eye, but should allow you to go as far forward as needed.

If you can't get the bead over the wraps and silicone, don't blame me. Remember I told you "one wrap only in each direction"? :-)



Take 10 or 11 wraps of lead wire behind the bead, then re-start your thread behind the lead. Wrap the thread back to the bend and then back to the lead wire. You can do this a few times if you like, building up a taper to the lead. This will help smooth out the body later.



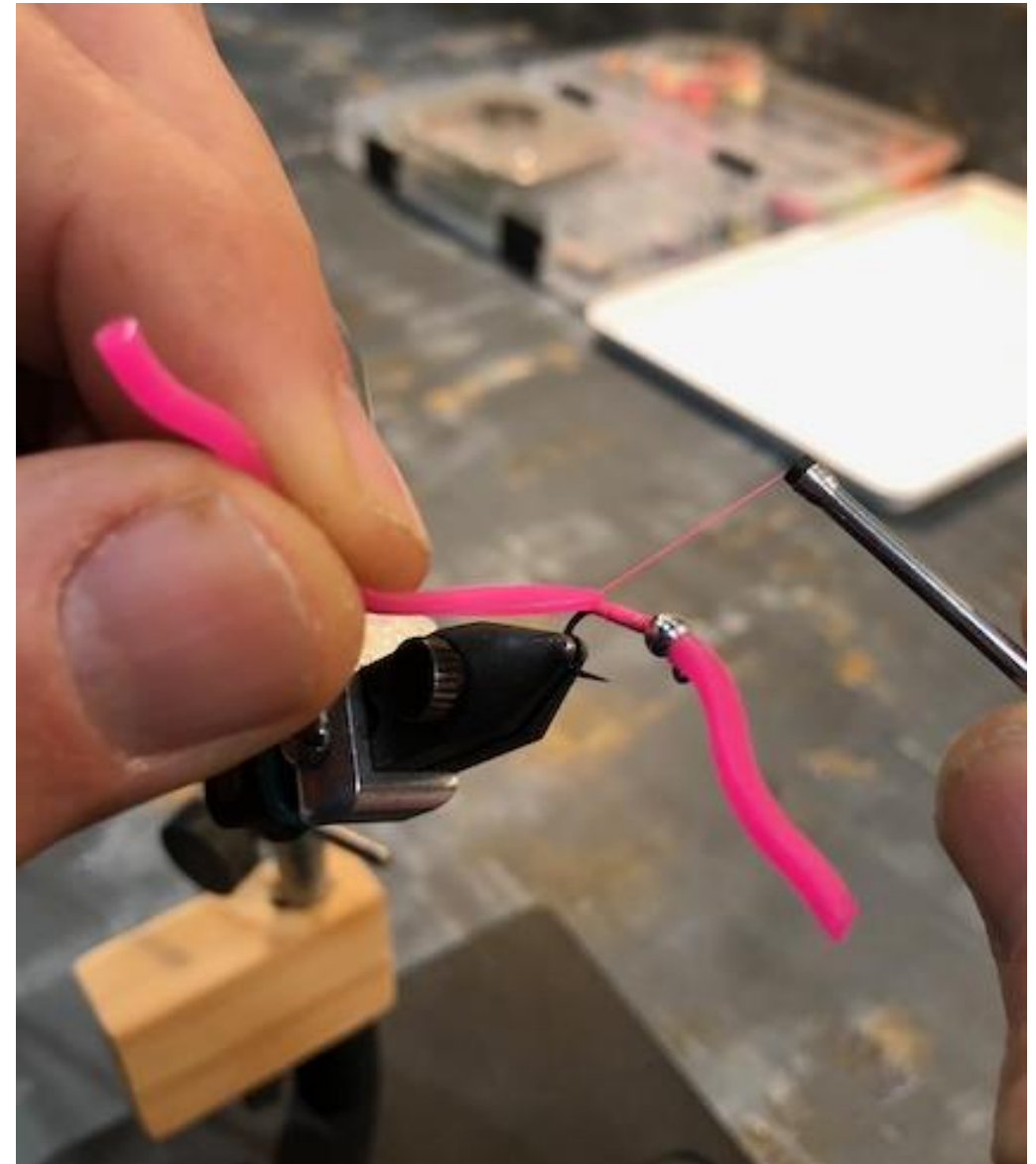
Advance your thread over the lead wire up to the bead and back to the hook bend, leaving the thread there. One closely wrapped pass back should be sufficient to cover the lead. This adds bulk and color to the body and secures the lead.



Place your second piece of silicone behind your thread, leaving about 1/3 toward your vise, the rest pointing toward the eye of the hook.



Grab both ends of the silicone and while pulling the silicone gently toward yourself, draw your thread up and over the hook shank, taking up the slack in your thread, while keeping the silicone on top or slightly closer to you on the shank. This will begin the securing of the tail piece.



While still holding the long end of the silicone, release the short end. At this point, the silicone will have switched orientation and the short end will now be pointing toward the eye of the hook. Now, while keeping the silicone on top of the hook, take 4 or 5 **gentle** overlapping wraps. If you pull too hard, you'll just shift the silicone around the hook. The object is to keep it on top of the hook as much as possible. This may require a little manipulation of the silicone as it has a mind of its own.



Once you're happy with the orientation of the silicone, you can take 3 or 4 loose wraps in front to the tie in of the silicone. THEN cinch them up and advance the thread back up to just behind the bead.



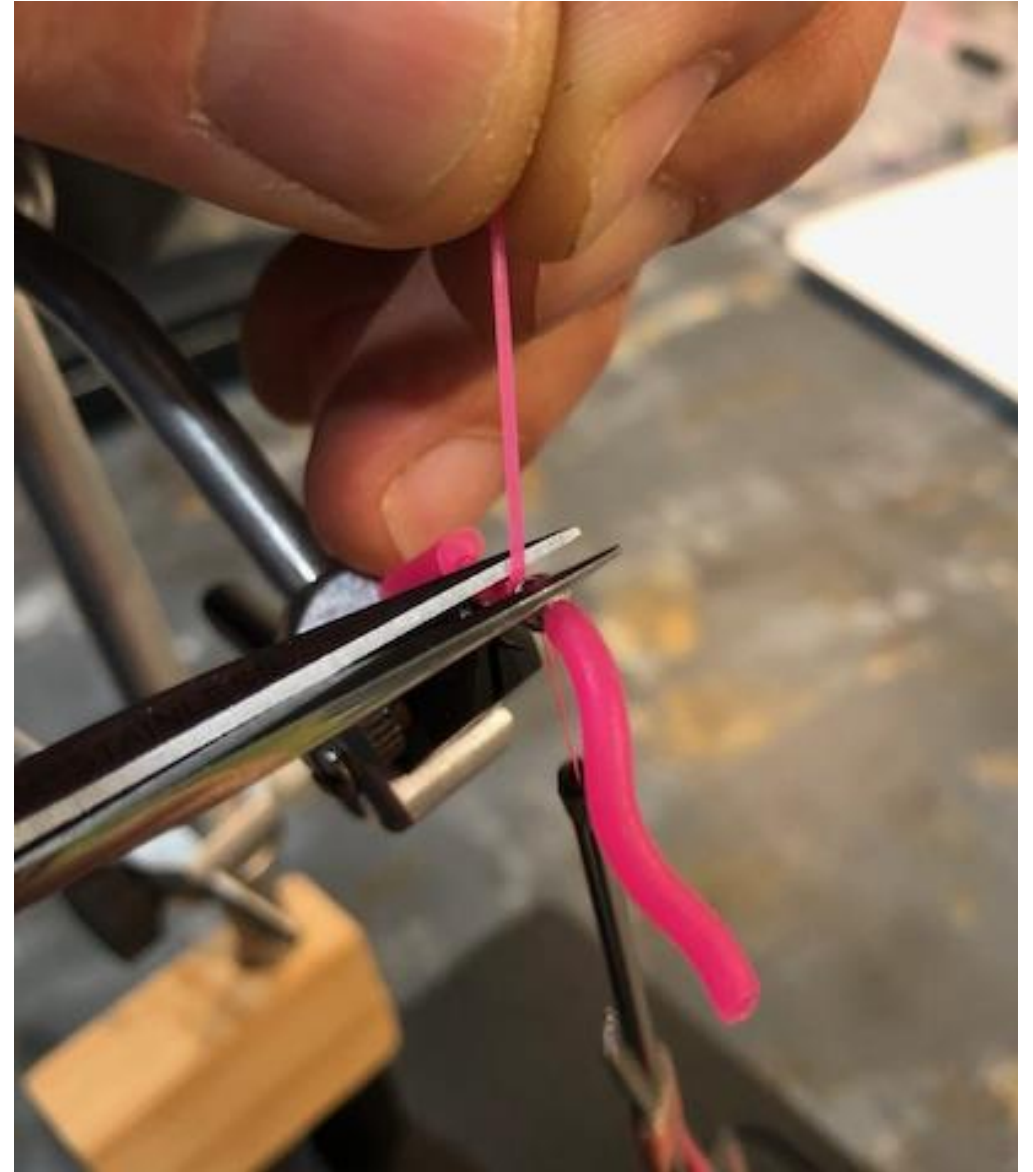
Wrap the short end of the silicone, advancing it to the bead. This will probably be about 6 turns, but may vary. There should be no gap between the bead and the silicone. It can even overlap slightly.

Now, while retaining your grip on the silicone, take a couple of wraps to secure it. It's awkward, I know.

Now you can release the silicone and take 3 or 4 additional wraps.



Gently pull the tag end of the silicone and snip it off. Don't pull too hard and don't trim it too closely. You run the risk of the silicone coming out from under your securing wraps if you do either. Don't worry, the end won't even show as the elastic material will all but retract to virtually nothing.



A couple of whip finishes completed the fly, other than trimming it to your preferred length. I like about an inch of loose silicone at each end.

That's it!

