

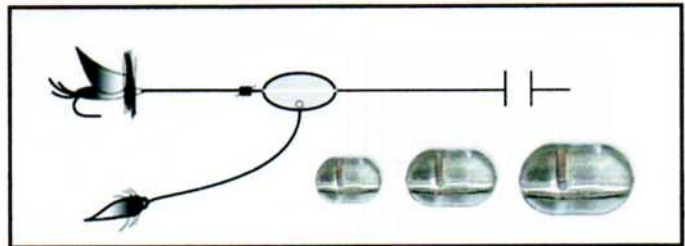
Knots and Rigging: The Gamakatsu Dropper Bead

By: Tod Suttle

Being in the right place at the right time is a phrase that we all have heard, and it is often appropriate in the world of the fisherman. Many times, the smallest tackle tip that you can pick up on the stream, in the surf, or at a meeting can improve your angling success. In January of 2009, I ventured down to an outing in San Diego with a group of anglers that I met in an online fishing forum. Having never met any of them personally, I was a bit apprehensive, but the day ended up being exceptional. I found an outstanding new fishing location, picked up a wealth of knowledge, and made a few close friends in the process. One of the 'little tips' that I picked up that day from my friend Dave was the use of a fishing product known as the Gamakatsu "dropper bead."

Most fly fishermen, at some point in their lives, have fished with a multiple fly rig. Whether you are fishing a hopper/dropper, a double-nymph rig, or a double-surf rig, it is often agreed upon that two flies are better than one. When I am fly-fishing in the salt, I almost always use at least two flies. Before meeting Dave, I had a knot system that I regularly used which connected my flies successfully and resulted in only a few minor tangles. However, after realizing the benefits of the dropper bead, it has advantages that far outweigh my old system. In the paragraphs that follow, I will describe how I learned to tie the rig and how you can use it to improve your fishing success.

Most of the time when I am fishing the salt, I make a leader composed of two different diameters of fluorocarbon. In most of the bays, I use a four-foot piece of 14 lb. test that is tied to a four-foot piece of 8 lb. test via a double surgeons knot. Before I tie the leader, I tie a loop in one end of the 14 lb. test and then I slip the dropper bead on this section **before** tying it to my length of 8 lb. test. Now the bead is trapped on the length of 14 lb. line. Next, I slide the bead down toward the double surgeons knot and I tie a double overhand knot in the 14 pound line about one inch from the other knot. Now my bead can only slide about an inch between the two knots. Next, I take another 12-inch piece of 8 lb. test and I tie it to the other hole in the bead with a 16-20 knot. You can use the standard clinch knot, but the 16-20 knot seats a bit neater. Now you are ready to tie your flies on; I usually tie the weighted fly (Clouser Minnow) on as the point fly and a non-weighted fly on as the dropper. Notice that your dropper rotates freely around the line, which greatly reduces the chance of tangles. I have included a picture as well as a link to the website. I realize that this might sound a bit complicated, but you will realize that the time spent tying this rig was well worth it when you catch two big bass on the same cast. I will bring a leader rigged up as described to the February meeting, so come see me if you want to check it out. Good luck!



http://www.gamakatsu.com/new_products/new_dropperbead.htm