

Deciding what hopper pattern to tie is intimidating because of the bewildering array of patterns and sometimes the complexity. To narrow it down, let's go with the following, and I will explain why as we go.

### **Keam's Autumn Hopper**



An outstanding small hopper pattern which has acquired an almost mystical reputation. The foam body and colouring often presents a barrier to most people who want to tie it. The tie pictured includes an overwing, which is not required, and as far as I can tell is not part of the original pattern.

You will need:

Hook: 2x short, 10-12 (the short shank hook is important)

Thread: 3/0 or 6/0 white or tan

Body: creamish white closed cell foam (this is the easiest part of the Keam's pattern to tie and the most difficult to procure – don't buy the foam, I will offer some solutions at the fly tying night)

Legs: Knotted waterproof raffia marked with pens

Head/thorax/wing: deer hair (note, fine deer hair is preferred, not the course muddler type)

### **AK's Tan Hopper**



This is an adult pattern. You will need:

Hook: Mustad 94831, 10-6 (or any 2x long hook)

Thread: tan 3/0 or monocord

Body: tan wool (if you do not have any there will be plenty on the night)

Hackle: brown

Underwing: turkey slip

Overwing: elk hair or deer hair

Head: deer hair

Not too fussy to tie, anatomically it looks close to the real thing, and it does away with legs, which can be a chore.

## Bredbo



I see the Bredbo as a wet grasshopper pattern. It is reputed to be the earliest Australian fly pattern. You will need:

Hook: standard 12. You can go to a 8 or 10

Body: yellow or green floss

Rib: gold tinsel or wire

Underwing: pheasant tippet

Overwing: speckled hen

Hackle: partridge

## Other Patterns

One of the most common materials used in hopper patterns is golden pheasant tippet tied in a bunch as a wing, sometimes said to simulate legs – one Bredbo tie uses the tippet clearly on the side as legs – but I rather think it is close enough to the wing of the adult grasshopper, the characteristic of which is the bright yellow and black wing.

A comparison of the classic yellow winger explains the predominant elements of many hopper patterns. The abdomen is usually creamy buff, the thorax brown or olive, the bottom of the legs are reddish, the overwing is usually mottled dark as per the natural, and the wing yellow and black. Thus most patterns are large (adults with wings) combining a smattering of or red, yellow, tan. See for example Dave's Hopper (below left) or Royter's Adam's Hopper (below right – can be purchased from [troutflies.com.au](http://troutflies.com.au)), Coulson's Red Leg Poly Hopper. If you put all this together I think the classic hopper pattern is the Flash Jack by Rick Keam. I have not got a photo but the pattern is in Peter Coulson's Australian Fly Patterns.

