

Ramblings of a Fly Tyer

Gray Hackle Yellow



This month's fly is an old American wet fly. The Gray Hackle Yellow is one in a series of 23 flies by James Leisenring (1878-1951), a professional tier from Pennsylvania. He co-authored "The Art of Tying the Wet Fly and Fishing the Flymph" with Vernon S. Hidy. He experimented considerably in the field of nymphs and nymph fishing, non-weighted or lightly weighted, and originated the "Leisenring Lift" style of nymph fishing. Let's get started.

Hook: Daiichi 1550-1560; Mustad 3399A (these you will have to hunt for, but I have fun collecting), or your favorite hook brand, heavy wire wet fly style, sizes 2-14.

Thread: Yellow & Black 16/0 thru 8/0 (I use yellow throughout and use either black lacquer or black pantone marker to color the yellow, when needed)

Tag: (Optional) Gold oval to match hook size

Tail: Red hackle fibers or red goose shoulder

Body: Yellow floss or wool

Hackle: Grizzly hen hackle

This pattern has been one that I have used since I was a teenager. I now tie it in small sizes for all trout, a little larger for half pounders and larger, still, for summer run steelhead.