

On The Fly

April 2006

"Fly tying is a school from which we never graduate"

PATTERN OF THE MONTH – Convict Damsel Nymph

Hook: 200R, size 10-18 or equivalent.
Thread: 6/0.
Tail: Marabou, Olive.
Body: Grizzly Marabou, Olive.
Rib: Tinsel.
Wing Case: Peacock Herl.
Eyes: 3/32 Dazl-eyes, Black.



Tying Instructions:

- 1) Start the thread behind the hook eye and attach the Dazl-eyes with a figure-eight tie and once attached put a drop of head cement on the figure eight.
- 2) Wind the thread back to a point just above the barb; tie in a bunch of marabou to form a tail one-shank-length long.
- 3) At this point tie in the gold tinsel, then wind the thread forward to a point 2/3 toward the eye.
- 4) Twist the marabou fairly tight and wind it to the hanging thread marker and tie off.
- 5) Wrap the tinsel forward to the marker and tie off.
- 6) Tie in 5-6 strands of peacock herl for the wing case.
- 7) Grasp the marabou butts, with no twist, and wind the marabou forward to just behind the eyes. Tie off but don't trim.
- 8) Smooth the marabou down to make a bed for the herl. Pull the peacock forward over the marabou and tie it down behind the. Advance the thread to in front of the eyes.
- 9) Form a head, whip finish and apply head cement.

This time of year many of us are looking forward to ice-out and the opening of fishing season on the lakes above the Rogue Valley. Fish stories from successful fly anglers early in the season tell of bellies full of Damsel Fly nymphs. These recurring annual reports peak my interest in finding an effective pattern. My research on the Internet and in my pattern books yielded a multitude of options. In the past, some patterns didn't produce the pulsating motion or the buggy look needed to imitate the natural. So this is my latest best choice to fill the bill.

The Convict Damsel Nymph was developed by Moose Peterson from Mammoth Lakes, California. Moose is a professional wildlife photographer and a fine fly tier. The increased "buggy" was accomplished with more marabou and the up and down pulsating motion was made possible by replacing the mono eyes with heavier metal Dazl-eyes, a slender body and the retrieval method. Damsels are predators and usually hang around vegetation found in the shallows where they feed on smaller nymphs. So if you don't pick up a little green stuff once in awhile, you are probably not fishing deep enough near the bottom. A hand twist with pauses is an effective retrieve to imitate the natural propulsion. When you are fishing the lakes this spring, try some Convict Damsel Nymphs and let me know how you do.

TYING TIPS

After you attach the eyes with a figure-eight tie, put a drop of head cement on the threads to hold them securely. You can add extra depth to the eyes by placing a drop of black fingernail polish on the ends. This can be done before or after you have attached the eyes to the hook. The dumbbell eyes made of metal are packaged under several different names if you can't find the Dazl-eye brand.