

# On The Fly

April 2009

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

## PATTERN OF THE MONTH-Stimulator

Hook: Daiichi 1270 or equivalent curved dry, size 6-16 hook.  
Thread: Fluorescent fire orange, 6/0 or 8/0.  
Tail: Elk hair, flared wide.  
Rib: Fine gold wire.  
Body: Bright yellow Antron dubbing or poly yarn.  
Wing: Elk hair, flared wide and tall.  
Hackle: Grizzly.  
Thorax: Amber dubbing or poly yarn.  
Head: Tying thread.



### Tying Instructions:

- 1) Mash the hook barb, put the hook into your vise, start the thread behind the eye and lay down a thread base on the shank to just above the point of the hook.
- 2) Select a small bunch of elk hair, stack it, and measure it to one hook-gap long. Tie in the bundle on top of the shank above the point of the hook; secure the butts with thread wraps and continue wrapping the thread forward to about 1/3 the shank length behind the eye. Trim any remaining butt ends at an angle to prevent bulk.
- 3) Tie in the rib wire at the base of the tail and let the thread hang.
- 4) Dub the thread or tie in the poly yarn at the base of the tail and wind forward covering the tail butts and advance the thread to the front of the body. If you are using poly yarn, tie it off and trim the excess yarn.
- 5) Select a brown hackle sized to the hook and tie it in at the front of the body and let the thread hang at this position. Palmer the hackle rearward over the body in five equal turns to the base of the tail. Counter wrap the rib wire forward to secure the hackle turns. Tie off the rib at the front of the body and trim the excess wire. Trim off the stem of the hackle at the base of the tail.
- 6) Select a larger bunch of elk hair for the wing, stack it, and secure it at the front of the body with thread wraps. The wing tips should extend to the bend of the hook. Trim the butts at an angle.
- 7) Select a grizzly hackle sized to the hook and tie the hackle in at the front of the body. Trim the hackle stem and form a tapered base for the thorax with the tying thread ending back at the base of the hackle.
- 8) Dub the thread or tie in the amber poly yarn and wind forward forming the thorax.
- 9) Wrap the hackle forward through the thorax 3 or 4 turns. Tie off and trim the hackle stem.
- 10) Form a small tapered head, whip finish the thread and apply cement.

The Stimulator was developed by the famous Oregon fly fisherman and author, Randall Kaufman of Portland, Oregon. He freely admits that the pattern is not unique and closely resembles many other downwing patterns. He has borrowed some of the best of the best and incorporated his favorite material and color combinations to create a highly successful and versatile fly. Tied in an unlimited array of color and sizes, the Stimulator is used as a caddis fly imitation in all seasons, a stonefly of any hatch, and a terrestrial for hoppers and beetles. It also makes a great attractor pattern rigged for searching with a dropper when no hatch is present. The Stimulator suggests a variety of food forms, while imitating nothing specifically. Maybe that's the secret to its success. Mr. Kaufman says it's his favorite fly and he's not alone. The Stimulator has earned its place as a "classic."

### TYING TIPS

Don't be fooled by the number of steps in this pattern. It's relatively easy to tie using common materials. Experiment with different body colors and shades of elk hair. Try tying on a black piece of foam or a few turns of peacock at the base of the tail. Near dusk, female salmonflies drop to the river to lay their eggs. That dark spot at the back can trigger an exciting take. Add rubber legs for additional movement and life. The body must be kept thin so in smaller hook sizes use a super fine and dry dubbing. Use peacock herl and red floss to create a Royal Stimulator. As you can see the possibilities are endless, which means you will need another fly box marked "Stimulators." So tie some up, give them a test flight and let me know how you do.

All of the materials incorporated into the pattern are intended to give the fly great buoyancy, which makes it perfect for heavy water or when visibility is a must. It also makes an excellent indicator fly that is easy to see and it will support the weight of a nymph. It also makes this fly perfect for skittering across the surface, the flared wing adding to the perception of the fluttering wings of the caddis or stonefly. By clipping the bottom of the hackle, you can set the fly lower in calmer waters for a more pronounced profile. From size 16 in brown or black for early winter stones to size 6 in black and orange for the salmonfly hatch, this pattern has been a go-to fly for all types of water and all seasons.