

On The Fly

August 2005

“Fly tying is a school from which we never graduate”

PATTERN OF THE MONTH-Street Walker

Hook Steelhead, up eye, sizes 2 - 8.

Thread Black, 6/0.

Tail Purple hackle fibers.

Rib Fine silver tinsel.

Body Purple chenille.

Hackle Purple.

Wing Pearl Flashabou.



Tying Instructions:

- 1) Start the thread at a position on the hook shank that allows the proper room for the head. Use this as a marker and don't tie anything past this mark. Wrap a thread base back to a position just above the hook point.
- 2) Tie in a small number of hackle fibers, ½ shank length, for the tail.
- 3) Tie in the tinsel rib and the chenille body material at this same position.
- 4) Wrap the chenille forward and tie it in at the marker.
- 5) Wrap the tinsel forward in 5 even turns, then tie it off at the marker.
- 6) Tie in the purple hackle feather and wrap 4-5 turns, wet style. The barbs of the hackle should reach the point of the hook.
- 7) Tie in a bunch of Flashabou, one shank length, for the wing. Position the Flashabou so it ties in front of, and up against the material tied in at the marker. This should create the desired wing angle of 30 degrees.
- 8) Form a neat head, whip finish, and cement.

The Streetwalker, originated by Gordon Nash in the 1980s, is a summer steelhead pattern. It is probably a variation of the traditional Purple Peril, using a Flashabou wing instead of squirrel tail. Under low light of dawn, dusk or an overcast day in the fall, it suggests a presence in the water, with just enough flash to be tempting but not too much to scare the fish off. A very effective pattern throughout the west, it also has been used as an attractor pattern for trout.

Gordon Nash, a knowledgeable Deschutes River guide and tier, originally liked to dress the fly on a nickel-plated hook. This would give the dark pattern even more attracting flash. With thousands of steelhead patterns to choose from and a never-ending variety of colors available, you should remember the old adage, "Bright day, bright fly, dark day, dark fly." Because most successful summer steelhead fishing occurs in times of low light, dark patterns, like the Streetwalker, are most effective. You should choose more subdued flies for lower, clearer water, and brighter days.

When restocking your summer steelhead fly box, you should take a look at some of the traditional patterns and don't rule out Atlantic Salmon flies. They are often deadly on steelhead. So tie some up, give them a test flight, and let me know how you do.

TYING TIPS - Thread Ribs

This pattern uses Flashabou for the wing. When tying dozens of flies at a time, folding and cutting flash material into exact lengths is very cumbersome and time consuming. Rusty Randall taught me a trick that makes this step easy and efficient. Just gather up the size bundle you need, then grab the bundle near the zip tie with an electronic test clip or hackle pliers. You are now in control. Now tie in the flash by the loose ends, pull back, and cut to length. You are still in control for the next fly. I will demonstrate this at the next meeting.