

# On The Fly

August 2009

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

## PATTERN OF THE MONTH: Light Olive Sparkle Dun

Hook: Daiichi 1170 or equal, standard dry fly size 14-22

Thread: Olive, 8-0

Wing: Light gray or dun deer hair.

Tail: Pale gray Z-lon fibers.

Body: Light Olive Antron or dry fly dubbing.



### Tying Instructions

**Step 1.** Mash the hook barb, put the hook into your vise, start the thread behind the thread behind the eye and lay down a thread base on the shank to just above the barb of the hook. Spiral the thread back toward the front to the 2/3 point on the shank. (That's 1/3 from the eye.)

**Step 2.** Select and cut a small bunch of deer hair from the hide, remove all under-fur and short hair, and align the tips in a stacker. Remove the hair from the stacker with the tips pointing forward and measure it the length of the hook shank.

**Step 3.** Pinch the hair firmly over the tie-in point and secure it with from eight to twelve more tight turns over the butts towards the rear of the hook. This will prevent the hair from moving around the back of the shank. Raise the butts and cut them at a slant towards the rear, thus helping to form a tapered body when wrapped.

**Step 4.** Layer thread wraps over the butts and continue to the bend of the hook. Separate a dozen or so Z-lon fibers from the bunch and tie them on top of the hook with the butt end up to the deer hair butts. After securing these fibers, trim the tail to length, one shank long. Now layer thread from the tail to the wing forming a smooth tapered body shape. Remember the natural dun has a slender but tapered body.

**Step 5.** Twist a small amount of fine dubbing tightly to the thread and wind it forward from base of the tail to the base of the wing to form the body. Use only just enough dubbing to cover the thread base.

**Step 6.** Separate the rear third of the wing fibers and draw them back with your off hand, forming a gap between the rear third and the front two-thirds. Take a single turn of thread through this gap and seat it tightly to the hook shank. This is critical to hold the wing upright when the fly is fished. Draw the second third of hair back, and take a turn at the gap. Hold all the hair firmly back and take many turns of thread tight against the front, forming a thread dam to prop the wing upright.

**Step 7.** Add a small amount of dubbing to the thread. Take the first turns tight against the front of the wing, the rest tapering down to the eye. Form a neat thread head, whip finish, and cement.

The Sparkle Dun style was developed by John Juracek and Craig Mathews of Blue Flies in West Yellowstone, Montana. Actually it is a modification of the Compara-dun style for mayfly duns, which was a modification of Fran Better's original Haystack, which is a common evolutionary sequence for most new patterns. All have deer-hair wings flared in a 160 degree arc over the body and lack hackles. The Haystack has a deer-hair tail. The Compara-dun has split hackle fiber tails. The Sparkle dun has a Z-lon fiber tail to represent the shuck of the nymph trailing off the back of the body of the emerging dun.

The Sparkle Dun floats flush in the surface film and represents an emerging mayfly dun trapped in its own shuck. It works very well if you fish over small mayfly hatches on smooth water. In the appropriate size and color it's a great choice for picky trout on a spring creek or tail-water mayfly emergence.

### TYING TIPS

The wing hair for the Sparkle Dun, sometimes called Compara-dun hair, is fine and solid with short black tips. The best comes from the leg of the deer. You can also use natural or dyed coastal deer hair if the black tips are not too long.

This pattern is easy to tie, using only three common materials. My advise, learn this style! once you have it, change the size and colors to match any hatch, anywhere, anytime. So tie some up, give them a test flight, and let me know how you do.