

# On The Fly

## August 2011

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

### PATTERN OF THE MONTH-Prince Nymph Soft Hackle

Hook: Daiichi 1710, 2X long nymph, size 10-16.

Thread: 8-0 black.

Weight: Optional lead wire

Tail: Dark brown goose boits.

Rib: Fine or very fine oval gold tinsel or wire.

Body: Peacock herl, 3 strands.

Hackle: Hen neck, mottled brown.

Horns: White goose boits.



#### Tying Instructions:

**Step 1** Mash the barb and mount the hook in the vise.

**Step 2:** Start the thread one eye width behind the eye and lay down an even thread base to a position just above the hook barb and build a small ball of thread.

**Step 3:** Select two dark brown goose biots at least one shank long, cut them off the stem, and set one aside for the second tail. Tie in one biot so the concave side faces out away from the hook on the far side first. Tie in the other biot on the near side in the exact same manor. Tie back on the butts forcing them up against the tiny ball of thread and apart. Secure the butts along the hook shank full length up to the original tie in point behind the eye and trim any extra.

**Step 4:** Cut a 4" piece of ribbing and tie it in at the base of the tail leaving the excess point towards the rear for use after the next step.

**Step 5:** Select 3 Peacock herl strands and tie them on top of the shank, securing them with spiral thread wraps the length of the body back to the base of the tail. Grab the herl strands and make one wrap over the shank and then counter clockwise around the tying thread. Grasp the herl and thread together and wind the rope forward in touching turns covering 3/4 of the body length. Tie off the herl and trim the excess.

**Step 6:** Now take the ribbing and counter wrap it over the herl body in 5 evenly spaced turns. Tie off and trim.

**Step 7:** Select a hen hackle feather with barbs as long as the body, tie in by the tip, and make 2 wraps forward, stroking the barbs rearward with each half turn. Tie off and trim.

**Step 8:** Select 2 white goose biots, measure them the length of the body and tie them on each side pointing rearward. The front end of the peacock body will hold them apart. Tie off and trim.

**Step 9:** Form a neat tapered head, whip finish, and cement.

This month's pattern, the Prince Nymph Soft Hackle, is a variation of the famous Prince Nymph originated by Doug Prince of Monterey, CA in 1941 for fishing his favorite stream, the Kings River. Back then it was also known as the Brown Forked Tail and used Ostrich herl for the body and a beard of brown hackle fibers. The soft hackle version is just one of numerous modifications to the original pattern, making up one of the most successful series of attractor patterns ever developed. In the book *Nymphing Strategies* by Larry Tullis he states "Attractor flies have built-in triggers. White wings and rubber legs often trigger a feeding response, as do brown, black, peacock herl and flash components. The rest of the fly may not matter to the trout at all. Once you figure out what type of trigger works best, you should have a good day of fishing."

He goes on to list some of his favorite flies including the Prince Nymph, which has 4 of the 6 triggers he mentioned. Like the Gold Ribbed Hares Ear, the Copper John, and the Pheasant Tail nymph, the Prince Nymph is a universally productive quasi-imitation of an underwater bug. This soft hackle version with its soft flowing fibers also adds the element of life and movement to the fly, making it an excellent scouting pattern fished on a dual nymph dropper rig. The nymph can be used in lakes or streams, can be fished weighted or tied with a bead head for a faster sink rate. How about using this one for Steelhead in larger sizes?

#### TYING TIPS

When cutting the biots off the primary wing feather, hold on to the two biots, not the feather. It is a lot easier to pick up the feather on your desk or lap than to hunt for the little biots that flew to nowhere. Larger size flies may require the use of Turkey biots to get the needed length. Take plenty of time in placing the biots correctly and evenly. When done wrong they can act as a rudder, spinning a twisting the leader. The rib is counter wrapped over the body as not to get buried in between the wraps of peacock rope. This also adds durability to the fragile herl. Limit your soft collar hackle to two wraps only. A sparse hackle gives a lot more action in the water and makes for a buggier looking fly.

So tie some up, give them a test flight, and let me know how you do.