

# On The Fly

## July 2008

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

### **PATTERN OF THE MONTH: Little Olive Flymph**

Hook: Daiichi 1710 or equal, 2X nymph, size 12-16.  
Thread: Olive 8-0.  
Hackle: Medium blue dun hen.  
Tail: Medium blue dun hen.  
Rib: Oval gold tinsel.  
Body: Mix of olive fur and Antron.



### **Tying Instructions:**

- 1) Start the thread one eye-width back from the eye. Select a hen hackle with fibers 1 to 2 times the hook gap. Tie in the feather with the tip over the front of the hook, the convex side against the shank.
- 2) Select six to ten hackle fibers, measure them the length of the shank, and tie them on just above the barb.
- 3) Tie in 2-3 inches of the gold tinsel at the base of the tail.
- 4) Form a dubbing loop and insert the spiky dubbing loosely between the threads of the loop. Twist the loop to form a dubbing rope and wind it forward to the hackle tie-in point. Tie off and trim.
- 5) Wind the ribbing forward in 4-6 evenly-spaced turns. Tie off and trim. Return the working thread to the mid-point of the body in one long turn towards the rear.
- 6) Take one turn of hackle at the hook eye. Place a second turn just behind the first, take another turn halfway to the thread, then the final turn at the mid-point of the body. Capture the hackle under a couple turns of thread and trim off excess, then work the thread forward through the hackle to the eye. Form a neat head, whip-finish and apply cement.

“Flymph—A wingless artificial fly with a soft, translucent body of fur or wool which blends with the undercolor of the tying silk when wet, utilizing soft hackle fibers easily activated by the currents to give the effect of an insect alive in the water, and strategically cast diagonally upstream or across for the trout to take just below or within a few inches of the surface film.”

The text above was quoted from *The Art of Tying the Wet Fly & Fishing the Flymph* by James E. Leisenring and Vernon S. Hidy, and published in 1971. The history of the Flymph goes back to England and the Stewart Spider documented in the 1600s. “Soft-hackle nymphs,” “wingless wets,” “tailed soft hackles,” “flymphs.” Whatever you call them, these patterns wreak of life and are super attractive to fish of all species. Whether they indeed imitate the stage between a nymph and an adult fly, I tend to feel, like other patterns, they catch fish because they indicate life in a very versatile manner.

The Little Olive Flymph was developed by Dave Hughes. I was lucky enough to attend his seminar in May, which prompted me to buy his book, *Wet Flies*, a very good read, which encouraged me to write this column. Anyway, there is nothing more frustrating than trout that refuse a matching dry during a good hatch. With close observation you can determine that the trout are indeed focused on the emergers rather than the duns. This pattern in a matching color could turn the odds in your favor. My advice: tie some up in different colors and sizes to match your local hatches, and have a box-full available to fish under the hatch. Give them a test flight and let me know how you do.

### **TYING TIPS**

This fly is successful because of the spiky body. This can only be achieved with a dubbing loop method. Don't twist or wind it too tightly. If the fly looks tidy, you've made a mistake. Working the thread back through the hackle towards the eye will strengthen the fibers without forcing them down. This is an easy tie using common materials and the variations are endless.