

On The Fly

June 2005

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

PATTERN OF THE MONTH-Olive Scud

Hook	Curved scud or TMC 200R, size 14 - 10.
Thread	Olive 6/0 or 8/0.
Weight	Lead wire, 6 to 10 wraps at mid-shank.
Tail	Olive hackle fibers.
Rib	Tag of working thread or contrasting color.
Shellback	Clear, stretchy material trimmed to width.
Body	Olive hair-tron, rabbit, or squirrel blend.
Antennae	Olive hackle fibers.



Tying Instructions:

1. Start by wrapping a thread base on the hook shank. Wrap the lead wire and lock it with thread wraps and ramp both ends.
2. Tie in the tail fibers, 1/3 hook-shank length, well down on the bend.
3. At the base of the tail, tie in the ribbing thread then the shellback material.
4. Form a dubbing loop with the tying thread, insert dubbing material and twist it into a dubbing rope.
5. Wrap the rope forward and tie it off leaving a little room before the eye.
6. Tie in the hackle fibers for the antennae, then pull the shellback material forward over the body and tie the shellback off at the base of the antennae. Make sure the shellback is centered before you tie it off.
7. Wrap the ribbing thread forward in 4 to 6 evenly spaced turns over the shellback and body.
8. Tie off the ribbing thread and clip the excess. Form a nice neat thread head, whip finish and apply cement.
9. Pick out the guard hairs on both sides below the shellback.

This month's pattern, the Olive Scud, is an easy tie and an important weapon in the stillwater fisherman's arsenal. Scuds belong to the order Amphipoda of the class Crustacea. Crustaceans are permanent organisms of the lake spending their entire lives under water and are frequently the primary food source for trout throughout the year. Even where there are abundant hatches of aquatic insects, the scud can be as much as 50% of a trout's diet. Many anglers use scuds as an indicator of the quality of fishing in a lake. Such rich waters usually support many other high-energy foods and support exceptional populations of fast growing and large trout.

Scuds prefer shorelines - often the first three feet of lake will harbor the largest concentration of scuds. They are commonly found down to the 20-ft depth and in waters ranging from sea level to 12,000-ft elevation. Scuds have a definite shyness toward light and have a tendency to seek out shadowy, dark areas in mud or vegetation during daylight hours. During overcast days and early or late evening hours, scuds can be observed swimming and darting along lake margins.

Depending on habitat, scuds are commonly found in many different colors such as grays, browns, olives, tans, creams, and combinations of all the above. The curved-shaped pink shrimp sold for scud imitations are not very effective even though the naturals turn tan or slightly rosy, but only when dead. Scud patterns should not be tied with a drastic curve to the body. When swimming, and most available to trout, these little creatures are completely stretched out with only a slight curve at the tail. Scud patterns should have an elongated body on a slight-curved hook for a more natural appearance.

A good scud pattern should have a fur body picked out along the underside to simulate legs and gills. Imitations usually have a smooth, segmented back and very short rear appendages and antennae. Patterns may be weighted or unweighted and sizes 8 to 16 are possible depending on the waters you fish.

Tie some up. Give them a test flight, and let me know how you do.

TYING TIPS - Dubbing Teasers

On this scud pattern, as well as many other nymph patterns where hair dubbing is used to imitate appendages, it is necessary to pick out the guard hairs after the fly is completed. Although many different teasers are used, my favorite is a small-caliber bore brush used to clean the barrels of guns. They are readily available in most sporting goods store for a couple bucks. Simply twist the treaded end into a small hole of your homemade handle and you have an inexpensive and effective dubbing teaser.