

# On The Fly

June 2010

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

## PATTERN OF THE MONTH: CDC & Elk

Hook: Daiichi 1100 or 1170, standard dry #12-18  
Thread: Brown, 8-0.  
Body/Hackle: CDC feather.  
Rib: Copper wire.  
Wing/Head: Fine tipped deer hair.



### Tying Instructions

- Step 1:** Mash the barb and mount the hook in the vise. Start the tying thread two eye widths behind the eye and wrap a thread base back to a point just above the barb.
- Step 2:** Select a CDC feather of the proper color and size, fibers 2 times the shank length, gather the tip fibers together and tie it in by the tip just above the barb.
- Step 3:** Spiral the thread forward to just behind the eye. Grab the butt of the CDC feather and wind it forward around the shank in touching turns. Stoke the free barbules backwards as you make each turn. Tie off and secure with thread wraps. Trim the CDC butt.
- Step 4:** Select a small bunch of straight, fine tipped deer hair and even the tips in a stacker. Measure the bunch so the tips just reach the outside bend of the hook, trim the butts square with the front of the eye, and tie down the wing to the top of the shank with tight thread wraps.
- Step 5:** Form a small thread head in front of the stubs, whip finish, and cement.

The CDC & Elk was developed by Hans Weilenmann in 1992 as a modified Elk-hair caddis. Since then it has become a firm favorite with a multitude of anglers across several continents. It combines the proven silhouette and buoyancy of Al Troth's famous pattern and the dubbed body look and straggling filaments from sprawling insect legs or a trailing shuck. It has become a go-to fly for many mayfly hatches, a general search pattern to cover hatchless periods, an emerger pattern, and a wet fly. It is a pattern deceptive in its simplicity and versatility. Martha, this is an extremely effective 2-material, 2 minute-to-tie winner.

While originally designed to be a dry caddis imitation, it has proven to be much more useful. Try it during mayfly hatches, an emerger in the film, or a straight wet. The CDC & Elk has proven to cover the full spectrum of dry, damp and wet. Lee, you have to try this one.

### TYING TIPS

Selecting the right CDC feather is the key to tying success on this one. Not only do the barbs need to be the proper length but the stem must be long and flexible enough to complete the body and hackle. Here is a simple little tip for firmly securing the deer hair wing. After the first 4 initial thread wraps, take one additional wrap about halfway through the hair stubs and another in front of the stubs. It keeps the wing on top and keeps it from pulling out. Any tier can produce dozens of these babies, so tie some up, give them a test flight and let me know how you do