

On The Fly

May 2011

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

PATTERN OF THE MONTH-Tabou Caddis Emerger

Hook: Daiichi 1270, curved shank, size 16-14.
Thread: 8-0 brown
Rib: Clear 0.5mm Stretch Magic.
Tail: Hen chick-a-bou, medium tan or brown.
Body: Hen chick-a bou, medium tan or brown.
Legs: Chick-a bou fibers
Wing: Brahma or mottled hen soft hackle.
Head: Trim from soft hackle feather.



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. Return the thread to the thread starting position.

Step 3: Cut a 6" length of Stretch Magic. Tie it in on top of the shank then bind it down with spiral thread warps toward the rear to the point just above the barb.

Step 4: Select a chick-a-bou feather, gather the tip fibers with your left hand, and tie the whole feather on top of the shank with two wraps only. The butt end of the feather should be pointing towards the eye of the hook. Holding the tips in your left hand and the stem butt in your right, pull the feather forward under the thread wraps until the tail is only 1/4" long. Secure with 3 or 4 additional firm thread wraps. Do not trim the feather.

Step 5: Lift the feather stem up and advance the thread to head area. With a hackle pliers grip the stem butt and twist the feather fibers about 6 turns. Wind the resulting rope forward in touching turns 3/4 of the way up to the eye. Tie off and trim.

Step 6: You will end up with some long wispy fibers toward the front of the body. Trim away all the fibers except those located on the bottom side. These will form the legs.

Step 7: Counter wrap the rib in 5 evenly spaced turns over the body, tie off and trim.

Step 8: Select a soft hen hackle feather and lay it flat on top of the shank with the tip toward the rear. Tie the feather on top with two wraps only. Again with the tips in your left hand and the stem in your right, pull the feather forward under the thread wraps until the tips reach a point just a bit shorter than the tail. Make sure the feather is exactly on top, bind the stem down with firm thread wraps, and trim.

Step 9: Take some of the waste fuzzy soft material from the chick-a-bou feather and wind it onto the thread like dubbing. Wind 3 turns onto the head area, whip finish, and cement.

The Tabou Caddis Emerger was developed by Steve Schweitzer from Colorado in 2002. He says he finally took the time to study on-stream, the different stages of a caddis emergence cycle. What he noticed was that emerging caddis are gangly, ugly, awkward, with fragile wispy legs, and a chunky segmented body. Those observations led to the creation of one of his most simple yet effective go-to patterns. It has a buggy appearance and best of all, it moves in the water. The fly uses 3 materials that are inexpensive and available. It is super fast and easy to tie.

You can weight the fly with lead wraps but it is not recommended. It is an emerger, not a sinking nymph. It is meant to rise to the surface. Try using a Leisenring Lift during the last part of your drift to mimic the emerging caddis. The strike will occur just as you begin your lift, or just at the tail end. Give the line a little twitch and let it linger just a couple seconds longer. This little trick often entices that curious following lunger to commit.

TYING TIPS

The Stretch Magic is a clear resilient rubbery material found in your local craft store in the beading section. It makes great midge bodies and ribbing for nymphs. Always counter-wrap so the rib does not disappear between body material wraps. If after wrapping the body you find that there are no wispy fibers for legs on the bottom, just grab a few off the waste stem and tie them to the bottom side of the hook shank. The legs should reach the hook point. This is one of the best caddis emerger patterns I've seen and it's real easy and quick to crank out a dozen. So tie some up, give them a test flight and let me know how you do.