

# On The Fly

## October 2004

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

### **PATTERN OF THE MONTH: October Caddis**

hook: Size 6, 8, or 10 steelhead  
Thread: Brown 6/0.  
Tail: Yellow calf tail.  
Body: Yellow/orange or fluorescent orange yarn.  
Wing: Red Squirrel  
Throat: Brown hackle



### **Tying Instructions:**

1. Tie on in front and tie on a bunch of red squirrel, one shank-length long, with tips pointing forward over eye. Leave in that position.
2. Trim butts of hair at an angle to form tapered body and wind thread to above point of hook and tie in calftail somewhat sparse.
3. Tie in yarn and wind forward to just behind wing.
4. Tie in brown hackle and wind 3-4 turns behind wing.
5. Wrap thread in front of and under wing until proper wing angle is achieved. Divide the wing evenly with figure-8 wraps, whip finish, and cement.

This surface-fly version of the October Caddis was originated by Bill Bakke and is fished by riffling it on the surface to imitate a struggling adult. During September and October large trout and steelhead key on these "biggie size" caddis whenever they are present. Throughout the west you'll find them in most freestone streams and tail waters with strong current and rocky bottoms. They start hatching in early September and are available through October. The hatch is sparse, a few adults fluttering on the surface or near the shoreline brush. If you're on the river this time of year make sure you have at least one of the many patterns imitating the October Caddis in case the hatch is on.

### **TYING TIPS - Divided Wings**

On the skater version of the October Caddis it's critical that the hair wing be divided and cocked forward at 35 degrees for good action. The process of dividing feather or hair fibers and securing them with figure-8 wraps can be frustrating and difficult for many of us. Try this technique I learned from master tier, Dick Bonamarte. With the wing material tied in, divide the fibers equally with your bodkin held parallel to the hook shank, and hold the bodkin in place while winding thread in the figure-8 style once over the bodkin and wing clumps. Now slowly remove the bodkin while maintaining thread tension and then finish the figure-8 wraps. I think you'll find this method will result in evenly divided wings tied faster and more secure.