

On The Fly

October 2009

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

PATTERN OF THE MONTH-20 Incher Stone

Hook: Daiichi 1270, Tiemco 200R, or equal, curved shank, size 4-12.
Bead: Brass or tungsten, size to fit hook.
Weight: Lead wire diameter to match hook size.
Thread: Black 8-0, 6-0 on larger sizes.
Tail: Dark brown goose biots.
Rib: Two strands of tan floss, one strand on smaller sizes.
Underbody: Dark dubbing.
Abdomen: Peacock herl.
Wingcase: Turkey tail quill slip.
Legs: Partridge feather.
Thorax: Hare's mask.



Tying Instructions

- Step 1:** Mash the hook barb, place a bead on the hook and slide it up to the hook eye. Wrap 10 – 20 turns of lead, depending on the hook size, around the shank, trim, and slide the lead wraps into the back of the bead. Lead and bead should cover 1/3 of the shank.
- Step 2:** Start the thread behind the lead and build a thread base covering the lead and the shank, tapering down to a point just above the barb.
- Step 3:** Select 2 goose biots and tie one on each side of the shank with the concave side facing up, away from the shank. The tails should be one hook-gap long. Clip the butt ends.
- Step 4:** Tie in two strands of tan floss at the base of the tail facing rearward. These will be used later for the rib.
- Step 5:** Twist the dark dubbing tightly to the thread and wind it forward from the base of the tail to the back of the lead to form the tapered underbody for the abdomen. This should cover the back 2/3 of the hook shank. Wind the thread back to the base of the tail.
- Step 6:** Tie in an 8-10 strand bunch of peacock herl at the base of the tail and trim. Grab the bunch together by the butts and wind them over the top of the shank, then under, then counter clockwise around the tying thread, forming a herl rope. Grip the herl, along with the thread, and wind it forward in touching turns covering the underbody to form the abdomen. Tie off and trim.
- Step 7:** Twist the two strands of floss together a few turns, spiral wrap it forward in 5 even turns through the peacock, tie off and trim.
- Step 8:** Cut a slip of turkey quill from the feather a little bit narrower than the hook gap. Square off the tip and tie it in, dull side up, at the front of the abdomen with the slip pointing toward the rear. Wrap over the turkey back to the 1/2 point of the hook shank.
- Step 9:** Select a partridge feather with barbs 1/2 shank length. Prepare the feather by stripping off the lower fluff and preening the barbs so they stand out perpendicular to the stem with only the tip fibers exposed to be tied in. Tie the feather in by the tip with the tip pointing forward, the stem pointing back, and the concave side up. Wrap forward over the tip and trim off the excess.
- Step 10:** Dub the thorax area, from the 1/2 point to the back of the bead, with hare's ear. The thorax should be thicker than the abdomen.
- Step 11:** Pull the partridge feather over the top of the thorax and tie it down at the back of the bead. The front side (convex) should now be facing up. Pull the turkey slip over the top of both, the partridge feather and the hare's ear thorax. Tie off just behind the bead and trim.
- Step 12:** Dub the tying thread with a small bit of hare's ear and wrap it around the shank at the back of the bead to cover the butt ends of the turkey wingcase. Whip finish between the bead and the dubbing, clip and cement.

On a recent visit to Ron Metzger's tying room, he asked what I thought of his latest fly-find from the internet. Since there are an abundance of stone flies in our home waters and they seem to work well this time of year, for trout as well as steelhead, and because I was looking for a new stonefly pattern for an article, I was definitely interested. At first sight the 20 Incher Stone looked buggy, for good reason. It had the shape, color, and materials needed for a killer imitation. Peacock herl, hare's ear and partridge for life, lead wire and a bead to get the fly down in front of the fish, common materials and an easy tie. Now that was my kind of fly.

The 20 Incher Stone was developed in Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley. The originator is unknown but its effectiveness is well documented. It is a simple combination of common and proven materials put together in a creative way. Even though the list of materials and the tying steps are lengthy, the fly is quite simple to tie and intermediate skills will easily master the pattern.

TYING TIPS

The key to this pattern and its effectiveness is all in the proportions. Pay close attention to the directions and follow them closely. It is essential to get the measurements correct. If you use the hook as your gauge, the results on and off the water will be rewarding. The biggest mistake is making the thorax too short. Remember, the thorax and bead should be equal to half the shank length. It's all in the details. So tie some up, give them a test flight, and let me know how you do.