

FFF Fly of the Month

MINI POP



By Bob Bates

Like so many steelhead flies, the Mini Pop is beautiful in real live color. Is the color to attract the steelhead or the steelhead angler? The experts tell me that color is important, but which color combination is best depends on a lot of things

This fly came from the fertile mind and memory of G.L. Britton in about 1992. At the time he owned Silver Bow Fly Fishing Adventures in Spokane, WA. He doesn't claim to be the sole originator of it since most new flies are built on earlier ideas and patterns. However, at this point in time I cannot find any steelhead pattern like it. Marabou speys are somewhat similar in appearance, but the tying method is different.

So much for history and references: Does it catch fish? YES! It may be fished on floating, sink tip or full sinking lines. Down stream quartering cast will deliver a Mini Pop so it can swing across current and attract attention. One caution when using it with a floating line, the fly will wake across slick

fast water in the tail of a pool or flat. Sometime that excites the fish, and they will come slashing after it. Just remember when a steelhead hits a surface or near surface fly you have to let it go until you feel some weight.

This fly is tied in a wide range of colors and color combinations, depending on your preference and that of the fish. Steelhead on the Dean River liked the pink version (6). G.L. found that chartreuse and lime (1) was preferred by pink and chum salmon on one of his trips to Bella Coola, British Columbia. He also uses chartreuse and lime for steelhead when the Grand Ronde River is crystal clear.

Materials List:

Hook: Tiemco TMC 7999, 4 & 6

Hackles: All are saddle hackles; two rear hackles are given first and two front hackles second.

Thread: 6/0, color is listed last.

Color Combinations:

1. Light chartreuse - light chartreuse & hot lime - fluorescent chartreuse
2. Cerise - purple & blue - fire orange
3. Yellow - yellow & red - fire orange
4. Orange - orange & black - fire orange
5. Orange - purple & black - florescent green
6. Pink - pink & cerise - fire orange

Tying Steps:

1. Smash the barb with smooth jaw pliers so you can release any wild fish.
2. Pick four saddle hackles with fibers and marabou-like fibers (fluff) that are shank length long.
3. Strip fluff from stem, but leave 1/4- to 1/2-inch of fluff below the barbs.
4. Put thread onto hook right behind end of loop eye, and tie in two saddle hackles (first color).
5. Wind both hackles forward tightly while stroking fibers rearward so they aren't tied down. Continue wrapping until you have completed two turns past the fluff. Secure and clip off excess. Save the hackle tips for another fly.
6. Tie on second pair of hackles with 1/4- to 1/2-inch of fluff below the barbs, and wind thread forward to within an eye width of the eye. Wind second pair of saddles forward tightly, as you did the first, until you have completed three turns past the fluff. Secure and trim excess.
7. The stiffer barbs are now standing like a collar, so they need to be laid

back. Stroke them rearward and wind the thread rearward about 1/16-inch over the barbs. It should put everything into a pyramidal shape.

8. Whip finish and add a drop of head cement.

The Mini Pop in any color combination will catch steelhead in most of our steelhead streams. The only thing you need to do is find where the steelhead are and go fishing.

Please Credit FFF Website or FFF Clubwire with any use of the pattern.
You can direct any questions or comments to flyofthemonth@fedflyfishers.org