

RED HEADED STEPCCHILD



By Bob Bates

Attach the red hen hackle between the last black hackle and the eyes. Take two wraps only, secure and trim. Ellen Clark from Ft. Washakie, Wyoming demonstrated this simple, effective fly at the 2006 FFF Conclave in Bozeman, MT. She fishes it using a floating line and an indicator. Depending on stream depth and condition a little weight can be added to the leader. One of the usual guidelines for stream fishing is to make the indicator to fly distance twice as long as the water depth being fished. Strike if the indicator does anything strange like stop, move sideways, move upstream or sink. I might be a snag, but it could be the fish of a lifetime. It looks like it would be a pretty good stillwater chironomid pattern also. Adjust the leader so the fly hangs near the bottom or just above the weeds. Usually the indicator will go down when you are watching an eagle or pouring a cup of coffee.

These pictures were taken as she tied the fly.

Materials:

Hook: Daiichi 1130, Tiemco TMC 2487, sizes 14 to 18

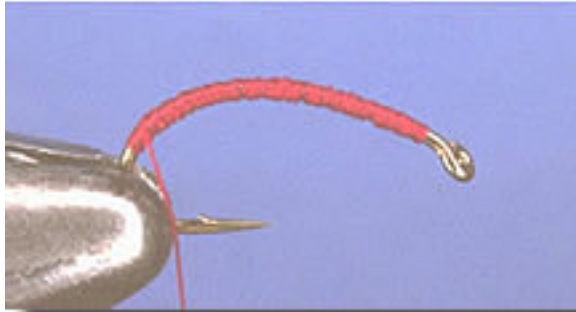
Thread: Red, 6/0

Body: Hare's ear and Antron or beaver and Antron, gray/tan

Hackle: Gray Indian hen neck, partridge, or grouse

Head: Red thread

Tying steps:



1. If you want a barbless fly smash down the barb with smooth jaw pliers before you tie the fly. Line the hook to make a heavy thread base.



2. Put a small amount of dubbing on the thread at one time. Roll it in one direction between the thumb and first finger to make the dubbing noodle. A little dubbing wax on the thread might be needed to make the dubbing stick. Wrap the body starting well around the bend and moving forward to within about two eye lengths of the eye.



3. Strip off the fuzzy fibers. Attach hackle by the butt and take only one turn, secure and trim excess. Wind thread rearward over barbs to make them point backward over body.



4. Build up the head a little, and complete with two whip finishes. Apply a liberal coat of head cement.

Closing comments: There is a lot of movement in the fibers as the fly moves through the water. That is what makes this simple fly catch a lot of fish. Try this pattern in your waters, and you might be surprised.

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You can direct any questions or comments to FOM at flyofthemonth@fedflyfishers.org