

BALINDERRY OLIVE



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Opening Comments

Dick Nicklas was tying this interesting pattern at the 2012 FFF Fly Fishing Fair in Spokane, Washington. It is a variation of an old Irish lough (lake) fly.

Dick told us that two materials for the fly originally tied by master fly fisher T. J. Hanna are difficult to find legally: thinly dubbed olive seal for body and red swan mixed with bronze mallard for wing fibers. His substitutions are olive thread body with a close woven chartreuse wire rib and mixed bronze mallard and red dyed golden pheasant tippets for wing.

The story is that it a great lake fly. So it is fished wet with a floating, sink tip or full sinking line depending on water depth. Let the fly sink and then start a retrieve. I usually start near the bottom and if I hook weeds then I shorten the sink time. It is usually a searching technique trying to find where the fish are hiding or feeding. If you see channels in the weeds, then by all means cast your line along the channel and begin a slow retrieve. In one shallow lake I have fished there are round holes in the weeds. Early in the season gasses build up under the weeds to the point that they break through. If the water is clear I'll fish the hole by casting across it and begin a retrieve that is fast enough that the fly does not catch weeds. It is great fun if you don't see anything. Then suddenly have the line tighten and you are into a fight. If the water in the hole is cloudy, I'll pass by that hole.

Materials list

Hook: DiRiki 740 size 10 2xl

Thread: Gudebrod 6/0 olive

Tail: Golden pheasant tippets.

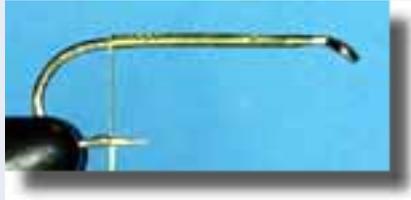
Rib: Brassy size, ultra, chartreuse

Thorax: Any dubbing, yellow-green, olive

Hackle: Hen saddle, tan

Wing: Bronze mallard and red dyed golden pheasant tippets

Tying steps



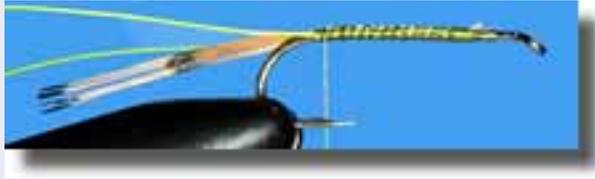
Step 1

Start thread near eye and wind to rear.



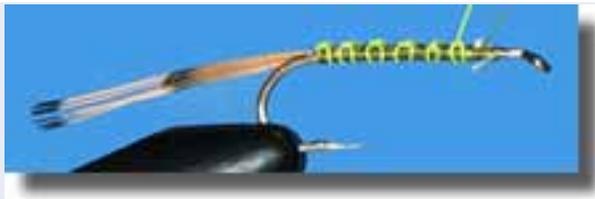
Step 2

Tie on golden pheasant fibers for a tail. The English tradition on this particular fly is to make the tail the same length as the body even on this 2X long hook. Tie with open wraps to where the front of body will be. Body will be about two-thirds of the hook shank long.



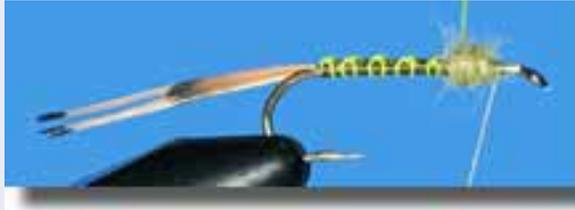
Step 3

Tie in wire for rib (3-4-inch long) Tie in one length of wire on the near side (will be top of fly which ends up in the right hand) and one length wire on the far side of hook (will be the bottom of the fly, ends up in left hand). Pull wires parallel to hook shank and wrap loosely over them to back of body. Adjust the wires to make sure they are on the sides of the hook.



Step 4

Secure wires by winding forward with close wraps. Thread will be the body so it should be fairly neat. Make a three turn whip finish and cut thread. Now start weaving process. Near side wire in right hand and far side wire in left hand. Over the top with the right hand and hold wire below the level of the hook. Move the left hand wire over the right hand wire under the eye of the hook to a position across from the right hand. Bring the right hand across the top in front of the left hand. Move the left hand wire over the right hand wire in front of and under the hook eye. Bring the left hand back to be across from the right hand. Keep doing that evenly spaced weaving to front of body. With wire you can turn it loose and it will stay in place. (Other materials like chenille or yarn will not.) Reattach the tying thread, secure the wire, trim the far side wire and leave the nearside wire in place. Remember to cut the wire with an old pair of scissors or the back part of your regular scissors. (Keep the tip sharp to trim feathers.)



Step 5

Dub a small thorax to keep the hackles spread out. Doesn't have to be pretty. Twist your fingers in one direction. Wrap forward a little. Note that there is still empty hook shank behind the eye.



Step 6

Use the left over piece of wire to spiral a little rib over the thorax. Secure wire, pull it back, wind thread over the loop to guarantee it is secure and trim excess.



Step 7

Prepare a hen saddle by trimming some of the barbs at the butt end. The hackle barbs should be long enough to reach the back of the body.



Step 8

Fold the hackle by stoking the barbs and shaft toward hackle tip with regular scissors. Do not use serrated blade scissors.



Step 9

Wrap the hackle in front of the thorax. The folding helps it lay down better. If necessary you might hold the barbs back as you wrap. Secure and trim excess.



Step 10

Tie in wing of red dyed golden pheasant and bronze mallard fibers. The wing extends to about the midpoint of the tail. Use the picture above as a guide for quantity. Trim butts and make a neat whip finish. Add a little head cement if necessary.

Closing Comments

Some tiers find it easier to weave with the hook eye pointed toward themselves or away from themselves. With chenille, ultra chenille or yarn I always point the hook away from myself because it is easier to pull the material toward me to tighten the weave. With this wire weave you are holding the wire tight but not pulling it toward the point. Tie some of these and test them in your favorite lake or stream.

Please Credit FFF Website or FFF Clubwire with any use of the pattern.

You can direct any questions or comments to FOM at
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