



September 2022
FLY OF THE MONTH
“Wonder Wings Made Easy”
Wonder Wing PMD



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Creator: Al Beatty

In the late 90s and early 00s, Al landed a job as Marketing Director for Whiting Farms in Delta, Colorado. His job there was to sell feathers and expand the company’s customer base.

During his tenure at the “farm,” we both got an invaluable education in “feathers” from soup to nuts. One of the many tidbits of information we gleaned from our feather education was the shape of individual fibers on a hackle feather. We always assumed they were round but in fact they are not totally round. Instead, they are kind of flat on the top and bottom and rounded on the sides, if viewed as a cross section of the fiber. They look like this “()” if the top and bottom of the two parentheses were connected by a couple of short lines.

At first that bit of knowledge didn't register until one evening after work we were tying an order of clipped-stem WW flies and Al accidentally got the wings too short. Rather than remove and retie the feathers, he gently pulled on them to make them the proper length. The feather stems slipped from under the thread turns and immediately "fell in line" with each other. In other words, all the flat edges stacked perfectly on top of each other.

The knowledge "light bulb" went off and Al immediately understood the importance of feather-fiber shape in relation to looped Wonder Wings. And he shared the discovery with Gretchen. After a few minutes of experimentation, we figured out how to tie looped Wonder Wings. It was easy! All we had to do was **tie them on short** and **pull them out** to the proper length. Wow! Isn't that easy? That little trick only took us five years and you get the benefit of our trial and error.

Now the only thing we had to figure out was how long of a section of feather stems did we have to sweep fibers back on to make a consistent looking wing? In time we found sweeping the fibers back on stem sections that were equal to $2/3$ the length of the hook shank (or a bit less) formed perfect looped Wonder Wings. Read on to see how it's done!

Today, we're featuring two Wonder Wing flies. One has a standard wrapped hackle and the other features a parachute application. Both are featured in our book *How to Tie!! Wonder Wings* available from Amazon at www.amazon.com or from us at www.btsflyfishing.com.

We've included this **YouTube video** in case you prefer that type of instructional presentation - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmkSJWoYD8U>.

Wonder Wing PMD Materials

Hook: Size 20 to 12, TMC 100, Mustad 94840 or similar

Thread: Beige or tan, 70 denier (6/0) in size

Tail: Whiting Tailing Pack fibers, ginger color

Wings: Large ginger feathers, looped Wonder Wings

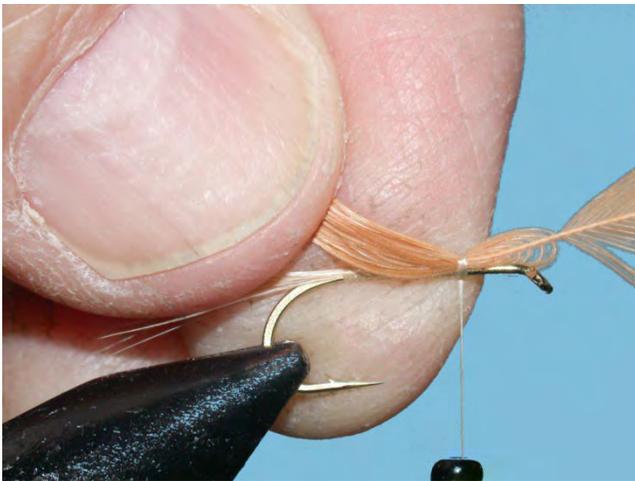
Body: Tan muskrat dubbing

Hackle: Ginger

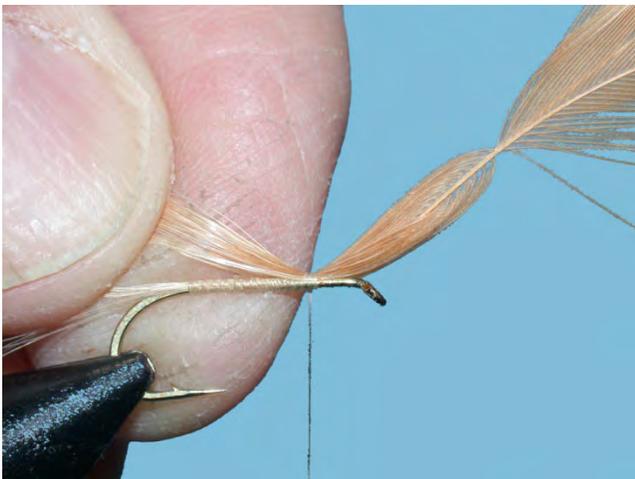
Head: Thread



Step 1: Mount the hook in the vise and apply a short thread base starting at the 1/4 position back from the eye. Wrap the thread back several turns so you have a base that measures the span of three hook eyes. Trim away the waste end of the thread. Select a clump of hackle fibers about as big around as the hole in the hook eye, even the tips and attach them to the back of the hook to form a tail slightly longer than the shank. Leave the thread hanging at the 1/4 position on the shank.



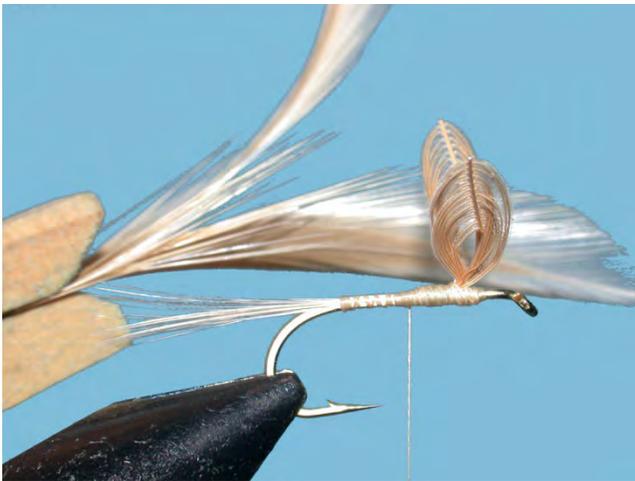
Step 2: Select two large ginger hackle feathers from a saltwater rooster cape, pair them so the natural curve is **away** from each other and trim away an inch or so of the base end (thickest part) of the stem. Gently sweep the fibers back along a section of the two stems that is 2/3 the length of the hook shank. Tie them on the shank **very short**. Use three snug but not tight thread wraps as illustrated. This is **important**, so take notice!



Step 3: While holding the fibers between the left forefinger and thumb, gently pull the wings out to the proper length. Be careful, once the stems slip out from under the thread wraps because it is easy to pull the wing assembly too far. If that happens, then you'll get the opportunity to do the process over. Do not tighten the thread wraps yet!



Step 4: Gently pull the wing assembly up and hold it between the left forefinger and thumb. **Now pull the thread tight.** Add three more turns of thread to hold the wing in place. The reason we do this is to make sure the stems in the wings are “in line” with the swept back fibers. The fish don’t care but we like the wings to look symmetrical!



Step 5: Wrap a thread dam in front of the wings, crisscross between them and trim off the excess feather tips. Place the tips in a clothespin for future reference.



Step 6: Apply the body, the hackle, a whip-finish and a drop of head cement to complete the fly. Now, that’s a good looking wing AND it’s easy to tie as well!