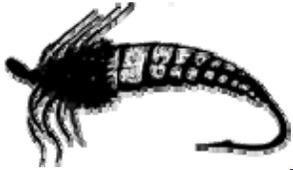


## FFF Fly of the Month

January, 1999: Caddis Larva



Latex Larva



Caddis Larva

### Caddis Larva: A fly pattern to change your luck

By Jim Abbs

Fly fishing is a business of trade-offs and probabilities. For some, the most exciting part of fly fishing is the unmatched thrill of seeing an eager fish gulp your surface fly as it drifts over a suspected feeding area. In a split second, but yet not too quickly, you must set the hook or the fish will have already rejected your offering. This is what makes dry fly fishers so dedicated. I know a well-to-do fly fisher who goes to Montana every year for two weeks and only casts to fish feeding on the surface. For others, nymph fishing, with the difficult challenge of presenting a fly in that whirling three-dimensional domain below the water's surface---is even more exciting. The undeniable argument for nymphing --especially if there no hatch--is that 90% of the time trout are claimed to feed subsurface. Furthermore, if you are looking forward to spring, some studies indicate that subsurface feeding is predominant particularly early in the season.

So, with this line of reasoning, the nymph fly fisher will catch at least nine times as many fish as the dry fly angler, especially early in the year. To this end, the fly of the month for January 1999 is obviously a nymph; but more than that, it is a variety of nymph chosen to increase your chances even more. Based upon other studies of fish feeding habits (some good, some limited), it appears that especially early in the season (April, May, June & July in the West, for example), caddisflies are the predominant trout food, often with a 2:1 preference over the exalted mayfly; these studies were conducted in New York, Virginia, Oregon, California and Montana. So if you want even better luck, fish caddisfly nymphs!

However, it is possible to increase your probability of success further by considering the life cycle of the caddis fly, which include larval, pupal and adult (flying) stages. Of these the larval stage is in the stream for the majority of the caddis life cycle, up to over a year in some species, while the pupal and adult stages last but a few days each. Obviously (depending upon species), the caddis larva is more available to the fish than other stages of the caddis and hence the most likely to catch fish.

The forgoing discussion should motivate you to tie some caddis larval patterns. To bring your caddis larva collection to a point where you are ready for spring, 1999, two slightly different patterns are described for the January 1999 Fly of the Month, with some adjustments to accommodate variations in local color and size. The principle difference between these two patterns are the body materials: thin latex versus fur. The latex pattern is Popular body colors are cream, yellow, olive brown, bright green, pale green, brown and black.

## MATERIALS

	<b>Latex Caddis Larva</b>	<b>Fur Dubbed Larva</b>
<b>Hook:</b>	Sedge hook or English bait hook (Mustad 37160 or Partridge K2B), Sizes 10-16	
<b>Thread:</b>	Brown (6/0)	Brown (6/0)
<b>Weight:</b>	Fine lead wire (Optional)	Fine lead wire (Optional)
<b>Body</b>	Strips of thin latex, colored with a permanent marker & underbody of floss	Fur or yarn, in colors noted
<b>Ribbing</b>	None	Light brown rooster quill (stripped) heavy monofilament or tying thread
<b>Tail:</b>	None	None
<b>Hackle:</b>	just a few Lemon wood duck, brown partridge or guinea hen fibers, tied beard style	
<b>Head/Thorax:</b>	Dark brown fur, peacock or ostrich herl	

## TYING STEPS

1. Lay down a base of thread.
2. If weight is desired, tie a segment of lead wire on each side of the hook shank. This pattern is best fished near the bottom and often in fairly swift water.
3. For the fur dubbed body larva, tie in the ribbing past the bend in the hook--at a point where the body will be started. Note: start the body further down the hook than in most other patterns to enhance the curved body of the drifting larva.
4. For the Latex Larva tie in a strip of thin latex and light colored floss.
5. For the dubbed fur pattern, dub a tapered body of fur for about 80% of the distance from the tie in point to the hook eye.
6. For the Latex Larva tie in a strip of thin latex and light colored floss and wrap the floss to create a tapered body for about 80% of the distance from the tie in point to the hook eye.
7. Create head with the fur or herl, with distinct difference in density, color or both from body.
8. Tie in a few long soft hackle fibers underneath the body.
9. Whip finish and put a drop of tying cement on the head.

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