

FFF Fly of the Month

GODDARD CADDIS



By Bob Bates

It was a dark and stormy night when Opps! That's another story. It was dark, but it wasn't stormy. The wind was blowing, but in Montana the wind often blows. My son gave me a black version of the Goddard Caddis, and after tying it on in the truck headlights we went fishing on a fast stretch of the Madison river. Fish were obviously rising because we could hear splashes up and down river. Occasionally we could see a rise in reflected sky light, but most of the time all we could see was inky blackness.

Tactics were simple, carefully climb down the bank and find the water's edge. If your feet suddenly turned cold you were a little past it. Strip out 20 feet of line, pull some of it through the tip top guide (back casting was prohibited unless you really wanted to tie on another fly) and let it drop into the water. Then start careful roll casts, and hope that you put the fly out in the river.

How did we tell when a fish hit? Easy, if we heard a splash someplace near where we thought the fly was, we just tightened the line enough to feel if it was heavier than it should be. If not, we relaxed and let the fly drift or drag or whatever it was doing a little longer. Many fish (they felt like rainbows and browns) grabbed our flies, were landed and gently released. All were between one and two feet long. Maybe I am exaggerating a little on the two feet but without a tape and light I can only guess.

The Goddard Caddis (G & R Sedge) was developed as a still water pattern by John Goddard, well known English tier and angler. It floats so well that it became a favorite of lake fishermen, and also proved successful for stream

anglers. This was years before *The Trout and the Fly*, 1980 by Brian Clarke and John Goddard described the fly. Some authors list others as co-developers, but I cannot find confirming evidence. The pattern described by Clark and Goddard is a little more complicated than what is given below. For one thing we do not have a green, seal-fur underbody.

Materials List:

Hook: Mustad 94840, Tiemco TMC 100, Daiichi 1100, or other dry fly hook, 10-16

Thread: A or Kevlar for spinning and brown or orange 6/0 to finish

Body: Deer hair

Antenna: Brown hackle quills

Hackle: Brown

Tying Steps:

There are many ways to tie this pattern from "spin the deer hair body and trim it in a cone shape, larger to rear, and chop it off square in back" to styles with some deer hair pointing rearward. However, when, I watched *Fly Tying, the Angler's Art* with Dave Engerbretson and LeRoy Hyatt, on Public Television, I thought LeRoy's technique produced a more realistic fly. (A note especially for the new tier 'also applicable to us older tiers:' Watch many tiers, try their techniques and pick the one that works the best for you.) As they say "there are many ways to unfrock the feline." No matter what specific motions are used to tie a fly it will probably catch fish. The pictured fly was tied by LeRoy Hyatt.

1. Attach thread near the bend. Cut off a sizable bundle (about the diameter of a wooden pencil for size 10 hook) of deer hair, and comb out under fur and short fibers. Trim off tips.
2. Put bundle on top of hook, add two loose thread wraps around middle of bundle, tighten but don't let bundle spin. Hold bundle on top of hook as you put several more tight thread wraps on top of first two. Wind thread through flared hair and half hitch in front of flared fibers.
3. Cut off an equal size bundle, clean out under fur and trim butts and tips. Position bundle in front of first bunch. Put two loose thread wraps around bundle, tighten thread until hair starts to flair and then turn it loose and let it spin around the hook. Wind the thread rearward into the first bundle; then forward again to front of second bundle. Winding the thread back marries the two sets of flared deer hair and stabilizes

the first. Put two half hitches in front of flared deer hair and cut thread. Front of flared deer hair should be near the 1/3rd point.

4. Take fly out of vise and trim bottom hair flat as close to the shank as possible without cutting the thread.
5. Put hook into vise backwards. That is: Hold hook in vise at bend but have the shank and eye pointing over the barrel of the vise. It is easier to trim the cone shaped body so it is narrow at the front and larger to the rear. (A rotary vise is very handy for trimming a round body.) Trim top of wing parallel to the shank and trim the rear of wing sloping toward the bend a little. Then at back of wing trim sides to give the wing a little wedge pointing backward.
6. Put fly into vise correctly, and attach 6/0 thread. Pick thread color to match the small spots of color on your caddis. Strip barbs off of two feathers from an inexpensive (import) neck, and attach stems so the tips stick out over eye more than total length of fly.
7. Select a hackle feather with barbs about 1-1/2 the gap width. Modern genetic saddle hackles are best. Pull off some barbs at the bottom of the feather and attach hackle to hook by the bare stem. Wind hackle forward leaving room to tie off hackle, secure and trim excess.
8. Whip finish over the antennae and hackle tie off. Use a bit of head cement if you like.
9. Trim antennae to match your local caddis. If antennae don't curve the way you want, simply trap one antenna between your thumb nail and your first finger and slide along antenna. The antenna will curve toward the thumb nail. Push harder with thumbnail to make more curve.

The real beauty of a Goddard Caddis, whether black or natural, is that it floats in very rough water, and several copies of different sizes should be in everybody's fly box. It also does a good job when "traveling sedges" (caddis) are moving across the surface of a lake.

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