

FFF Fly of the Month

EMERGING CALLIBAETIS



By Bob Bates

As Harold Patterson of Foster City, California tied this fly at the 38th FFF International Fly Fishing Show and Conclave in Idaho Falls, ID he made two important comments. One was this is a style of tying rather than a pattern. So once a person is familiar with the style they may change colors etc. to match the mayflies in their waters. The other is that it was designed to be fished during the pre-emergence stage of a mayfly's life cycle.

Species of the mayfly Genus Callibaetis, also known as "The Speckled Dun" by many anglers, are multibrooded. That is that there are up to three or four hatches each year, and hatches might happen from May to October. Callibaetis are most important in stillwaters, but they can be found in slow water stretches of many streams. In many lakes the mayflies become smaller with each succeeding hatch. The common name comes from the distinctly speckle wing markings on the spinner. Incidentally, don't worry about "Dun" in the common name: one definition of "dun" is "mayfly."

About an hour before hatching the nymphs become quite active. They gather in weed beds and swim back and forth to the surface. Eventually, they will hang in the surface film and begin their transition to a sub imago (dun). According to some authorities this transition can take seconds on warm dry days to hours on cool, cloudy, drizzly days.

Use a floating line and fish this pattern in the surface film. Depending on the situation, let it sit dead still or move it a little. Harold also suggested using a

Power Bait method with a small split shot on the leader and something to hold it near the surface.

Materials

Hook: Mustad R30 #12-16

Thread: Orvis 8/0 or Unithread Brown

Tail: Wood duck

Body: Biot, Brown

Wingcase: Fibers of turkey tail, use Krylon fixative

Loop wing: CDC, brown

Thorax: Superfine dubbing, Callibaetis color

Head: A complementary color, little darker, Superfine dubbing

Tying Steps

1. For barbless flies, smash barb with smooth jaw pliers before you start tying.
2. Start thread at eye of hook. Select four or so fibers of wood duck flank feather, and position so the tail will be about a shank length long. Tie fibers in at eye, and wrap to rear over the wood duck. Stop at bend, and pass thread under the tail to raise it slightly. When happy with position of tail take one wrap in front of raised tail.
3. Select a biot and tie it in by the tip with the hard edge to the rear. Wrap biot forward using closer spacing at first and larger spacing toward front of hook. Stop wrapping biot well forward of mid-shank, secure and trim excess. Wrap thread back to a little forward of mid-shank.
4. Select three or four fibers from a turkey tail, and tie in at least one on each side of hook with tips to rear. Trim excess butts. Return thread to tie in point at back of thorax.
5. Select two CDC feathers, match tips and curve. Then tie in on top of hook, tips to the rear, with two loose wraps. Pull stem to adjust feather. Excessively long fibers can be trimmed. Tighten thread and move it back to the tie in point. Trim excess butts.
6. Dub thorax forward to about one and one-half eye widths behind the hook's eye.
7. Pull wingcase forward, secure at front of thorax and trim excess.

8. Using a bodkin to hold the loop fold the CDC forward, secure and trim excess.

9. Prepare a symmetrical wood duck feather by cutting the stem to make a "v" in the fibers. Pull on the base fibers leaving 3-4 fibers on each side of the feather. Tie on top of hook with two loose wraps. Pull on stem to adjust length of legs. If the legs are held along the body they reach to back of body. Secure and trim excess stem.

10. Put a little dubbing on the tread and cover the tie down wraps. Put on two whip finishes.

Tie a few of these in size 12 for early season like now, and use smaller sizes for later in the season. If you don't know when Callibaetis hatch in your part of the world talk to some of the FFF members around you.

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

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