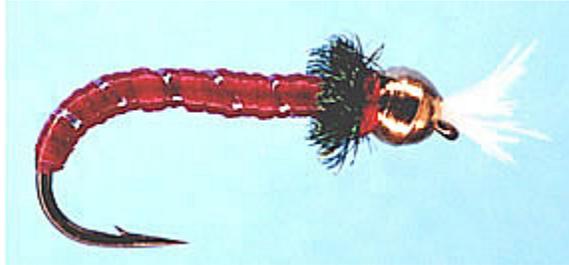


## FFF Fly of the Month

### Featured Fly - Bead Head Midge



**By Bob Bates**

Midge (chironomid) pupa or larva imitations might be the most important patterns available. Chironomids are all over the world and in all kinds of water. Lakes and slow water streams abound with them. They are in the water all year long, and different species hatch whenever there is open water. Usually species that hatch in the winter are tiny, but the spring and summer species are larger. Harold Patterson of Foster City, California tied this pattern at the 39th International Fly Fishing Show and Conclave in Idaho Falls, ID, August 2003.

Red has been a popular color since anglers years ago found red chironomid larva. It is the color of larva that live oxygen poor environments such as bottom mud and debris. They have extra hemoglobin, which makes them red. Other colors are also seen so keep a sharp lookout for bugs in your waters. Check the debris that clings to your anchor; there is a lot of information to be gained there.

How is a pattern like this fished? Two techniques may be used: Bobber fishing with a floating line or dredging with a sinking line. Neither sounds attractive to the "pure" fly angler. Using a strike indicator sounds better than a bobber. The strike indicator can be a piece of foam, yarn, cork or a dry fly. Put on enough tippet, fluorocarbon works great, to let the Bead Head Midge hang near the bottom or weeds. After letting the fly sink it is a matter of watching the indicator until it makes an odd movement. If nothing happens try something different: Depth, place or fly. Frequently the strike indicator will go down when you are looking at an eagle or other bird

fly by.

For dredging select a slow to fast sinking line or sink tip line to reach the depth you wish to fish. Cast, let it sink and then start a retrieve. The speed of retrieve is optional, but a slow hand twist retrieve is a good way to start because chironomid pupa move slowly. One thing for sure is that with a solid connection to the fly there will be little question about the strike. One general recommendation about fishing this way is: Shorten the leader to something like 4 or 5 feet.

## Materials

**Hook:** R30 #12-14

**Bead:** Brass, 3/32-inch

**Thread:** 8/0 Red

**Gills:** CDC puff, white

**Rib:** Tinsel, very fine silver or Crystal Flash, pearlescent

**Body:** Superfloss, red

**Collar:** Peacock herl

CDC, Cul de Canard, feathers come from around the preen gland on a duck. A duck uses oil from the gland to dress and waterproof all of its feathers. Such waterproofing makes CDC a natural choice for floating patterns. However, the fibers have a translucency and lifelike movement in water that makes CDC a good choice for wet flies also. Incidentally, never use a floatant on CDC dry flies just dry them with a cloth. Not all fly shops carry the CDC puffs, so look around or have the shop folks order them for you.

## Tying Steps

1. If you want to remove the barb, do it before you start tying the fly.
2. Put hook in vise point up. Pick up bead, and slide it onto hook with the larger opening toward the eye.
3. Turn the hook over, but keep the bead near the back of the hook.
4. Attach thread at the eye. Loosely tie a CDC puff on top of hook with tips sticking out over eye. Pull the puff back until less than 1/8-inch of the feather is exposed. Tighten thread, whip finish, cut thread and trim back of CDC as closely as possible. Apply a little head cement to let the bead slid. Move bead forward over the thread and puff. Reattach thread behind the bead.

5. First attach rib on top of hook behind bead. Then tie Superfloss on top of rib. Hold both materials as thread is wrapped rearward. Try to keep tinsel on the bottom, and both materials on top of hook. Continue wrapping around the bend a little. Wrap thread forward in close wraps.

6. Stretch the Superfloss at start of wrapping forward, ease tension as you move forward and really ease up on tension behind bead. Tie Superfloss tightly.

7. Spiral rib forward and secure tightly behind bead. The Crystal flash can be twisted to prevent it from going flat.

8. Attach a peacock herl behind bead, take three wraps of peacock herl, secure and trim excess.

9. Place two whip finishes between peacock herl collar and bead. Cut thread.

Now all that is needed is to decide where you will fish this simple pattern. Just remember if you are using a strike indicator, it will go down when you least expect it. Many of us find it difficult to sit and bobber fish, but it is a very effective way to catch trout and other fish.

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

You can direct any questions or comments to [flyofthemonth@fedflyfishers.org](mailto:flyofthemonth@fedflyfishers.org)

