

### 3P NYMPH



By Bob Bates

Dick Nelson's 3P Nymph has the three best wet fly materials -- Pheasant tail, Peacock herl and a Partridge feather. These three materials show up often in fly tying literature and separately in many patterns. Pheasant tail has a great reddish brown overall color and movement. (The individual fibers move and if you look at it closely there are fine hairs on each fiber.) Peacock has colors and an iridescence that flies made with it are irresistible to fish. Finally partridge is a standard for soft hackle flies because it moves so easily in the water. However, they have never been combined so effectively until Dick did it. He had 2 3/4 months in the hospital to think about it after his triple coronary by-pass surgery. I guess it should not be considered unusual because Dick is a noted fly tier and teacher who has been thinking about fly patterns for many years. He received awards and honors from the FFF: The Buz Buszek Award in 1987, the Charles E. Brooks Memorial Award 1997 and the Dick Nelson Fly Tying Teaching Award was named in honor of him. He has always been around the demonstration fly tying tables at FFF Conclaves. At the 2006 Conclave in Bozeman Lillian, his wife, did the tying while Dick made sure she followed his printed instructions.

Dick let me copy his instructions, and as I studied them later what impressed me the most was that this was a great teaching pattern. The handling of materials is precise and gives a new tier all they need to tie a fish catching fly. It also teaches a classic style of tying. Before bobbins we did all of our tying this way.

It is a mayfly nymph imitation so plan your fishing approach accordingly. It depends on your water and conditions. In stillwaters I would start with a floating line or one of the sinking lines depending on depth. In shallow water over weeds use a floating line. Deeper waters call for a sink tip or full sinking lines. The retrieve should be one that will let the materials move. A hand twist or short strip/pause would work. In moving waters varying currents will make the fly look alive. Maybe use a strike indicator (bobber) to help identify takes.

## MATERIALS LIST:

**Hook:** Mustad 3906B (Alt: Daiichi 1560; Dai Riki 060; Targus or Tiemco 3761), Sizes 8-16

**Thread:** Flymaster 6/0, dark brown or black.

**Tail:** Ringneck pheasant tail, 2 or 3 tail barbs.

**Abdomen:** Ringneck pheasant tail, 3 barbs.

**Rib:** Non-tarnishing copper wire, 0.005- to 0.008-inch diameter, (equal to 6X to 3X tippet) about 3 inches long. Ultra Wire, small, seems right for #12 hooks

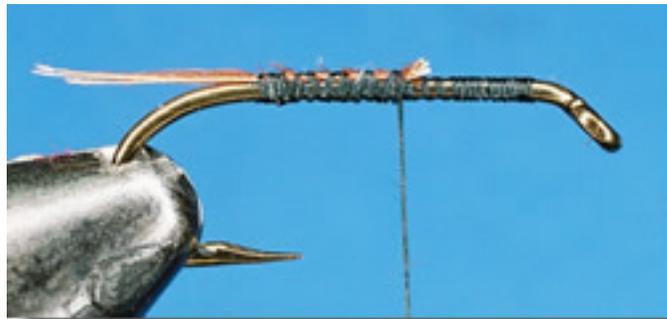
**Thorax:** One lush Peacock herl.

**Hackle:** Gray (Hungarian) partridge, one body feather, brown or gray.

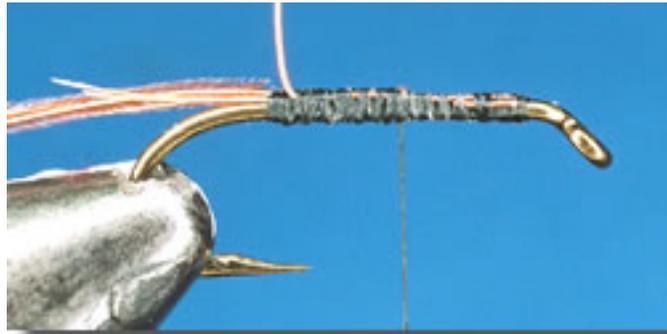
## TYING STEPS:



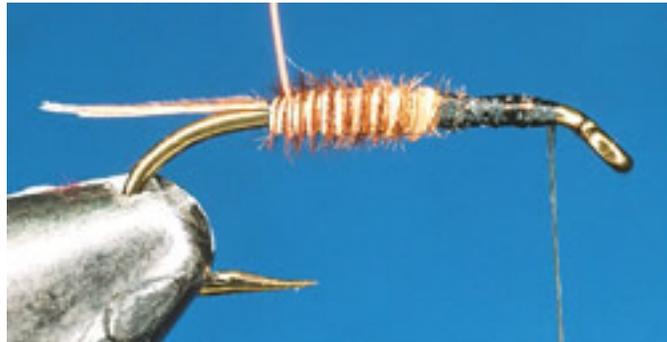
1. Attach thread at a point two eye-lengths behind the eye, spiral thread to the rear of the shank (over mid-barb, a little toward bend from point). Advance thread to mid-shank and half-hitch.



2. Align the tips of two or three pheasant tail barbs by stroking them perpendicular to stem and remove. Place on top of shank with tips projecting two eye-lengths beyond the hook bend, and tie on at hanging thread (mid-shank). Bind to rear of the shank; advance thread to mid-shank, half-hitch, and trim excess.



3. Put a 1/8-inch right angle bend in one end of the copper wire. (Using hackle pliers helps.) Tie in at the two eye-length point. Fold back the bend, overwrap and then bind the wire to a position over the hook point. Advance thread to mid-shank, half-hitch and lightly cement the shank.



4. Align the three pheasant tail barbs parallel to each other, make the first wrap behind the wire, then wrap them forward as a flat group to the hanging thread, tie down and trim excess. Advance thread to the two eye-length point and half-hitch.



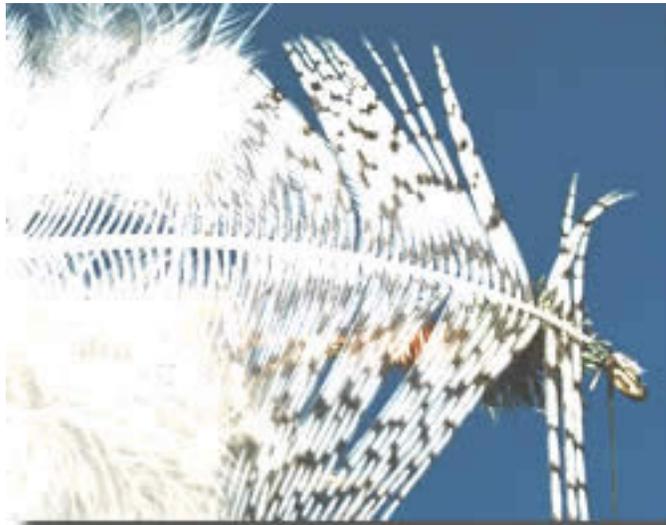
5. Trim off about 1/2-inch of the herl butt, tie on at the hanging thread, bind to mid-shank, advance thread to the two eye-length point, half-hitch and cement thorax area.



6. Reverse-wrap the wire forward in a spiral to mid-shank (about one eye-length spacing); then in close wraps to the hanging thread, trim excess, bind tag to shank, cover thorax area with thread, half-hitch and cement.



7. Wrap herl in close wraps to the hanging thread, tie down, half-hitch, trim and cement.



8. Prepare a partridge feather for tying in by its tip by exposing the rachis (stem). Tie the rachis at the hanging thread with convex side facing forward, trim excess tip short of the eye, bind rachis to shank by winding thread forward to the 1/2 eye-length point, half-hitch and cement.



9. Stroke the barbs rearward while wrapping the hackle forward one or two complete wraps, tie down, half-hitch and trim excess. Build a small thread head, tie off with a whip-finish knot from hackle to eye and cement.

**Closing comments:** This is one pattern that is not difficult to tie. Tie a bunch of them in different sizes and then go fishing as soon as you can. If it's already too close to the end of the regular season look around for waters that are open late or even all year. Remember that most of the time trout are feeding under the surface where this pattern works its magic.

Please Credit FFF Website or FFF Clubwire with any use of the pattern.  
You can direct any questions or comments to FOM at [flyofthemoth@fedflyfishers.org](mailto:flyofthemoth@fedflyfishers.org)