

Extended Body Foam Green Drake



By Bob Bates

If you have a reliable hatch of green drakes in your streams you are indeed fortunate. They are big and fish like them. Depending on location, elevation and weather the green drake hatch will come off from May to July. Some anglers travel thousands of miles to catch the famous hatches on rivers like the Henry's Fork. There are other hatches in the Western U.S. and Alberta Canadian. In cold water streams of Montana and Alberta the hatch might be as late as August. The hatch lasts only two to three weeks so timing of a long trip is critical. Some articles on the green drake indicate that hatching is roughly associated with 50 degree water, but some come off in water that is in the lower 40s. One interesting thing about the green drakes is that they are bright green when they first come off and darken within an hour.

Since they are a moving water species the buoyant foam pattern here by Max Darham of Bozeman, MT is an advantage. Max tied this one for us at the 2007 FFF Conclave in Livingston, MT. They are one of the insects that is considerate of the angler. Hatching starts midmorning and lasts about an hour on warm days. On cold damp days it might start later and continue into the evening. Even after the hatch is over fish seem to remember the green drakes. So even if you are days late to catch the hatch try a few casts with a green drake pattern.

The green drake starts breaking out of the husk before it reaches the surface, so it is wet when it breaks through the surface. It takes a while to dry off a little and expand its wings. A drag free float is normally recommended for floating flies, but a jiggle of the line might cause the fly to look like a struggling insect.

Materials List:

Hook: Scud, DaiRiki 135, Tiemco 2457, etc., Size 12

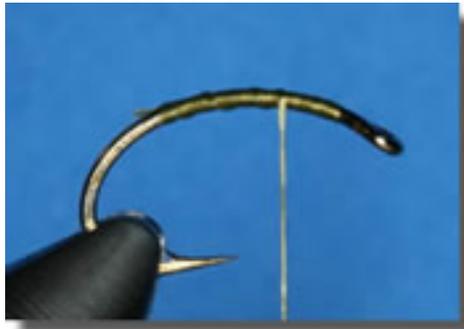
Thread: 6/0 Olive

Body: Swannadaze or Larva Lace, Yellow 2-inch piece

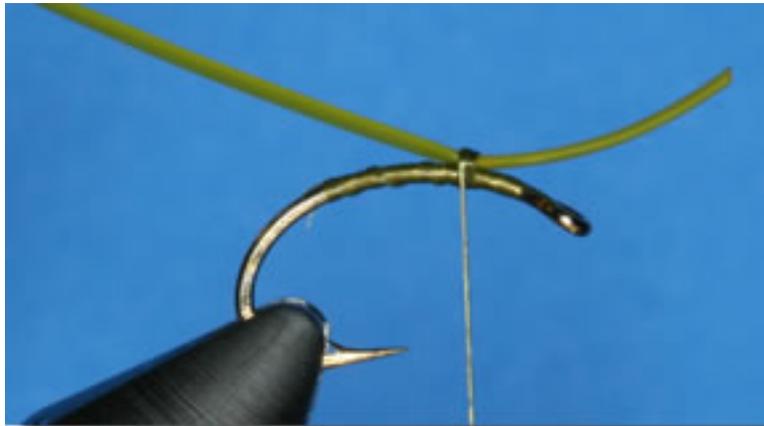
Tail: Moose hair

Extended Body: Green closed cell foam, 2 mm thick and about 1/4-inch wide

Tying Steps:



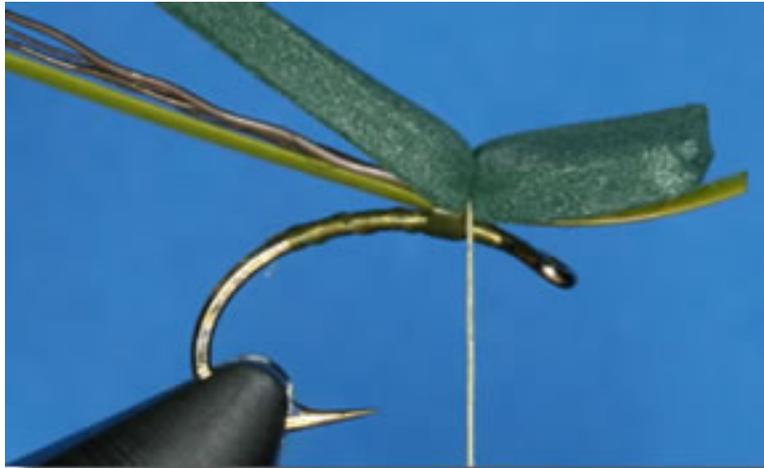
1. Wind a thread base, and leave the thread hanging about one fourth shank length back from the eye.



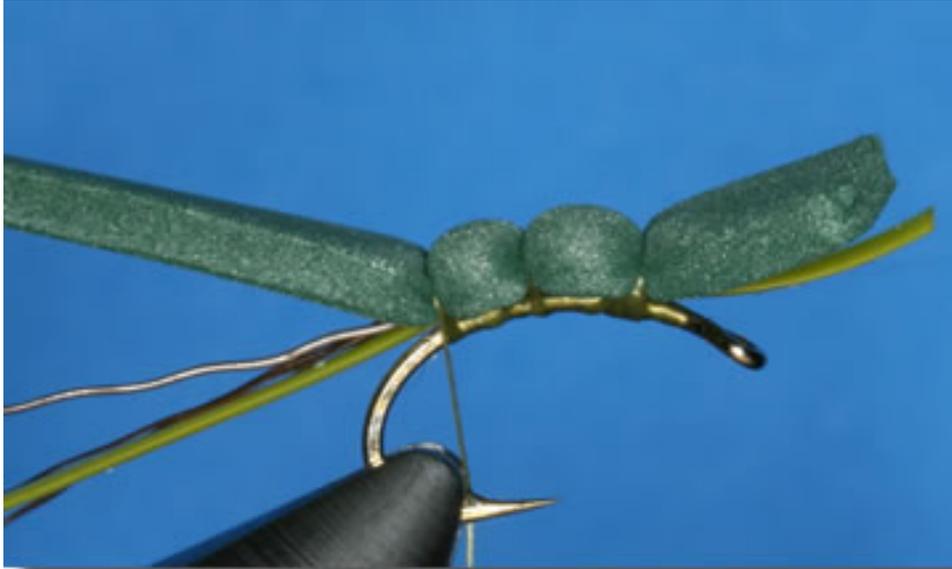
2. Tie a 2-inch piece of Swannadaze on where thread is hanging with about a shank length extended over the eye



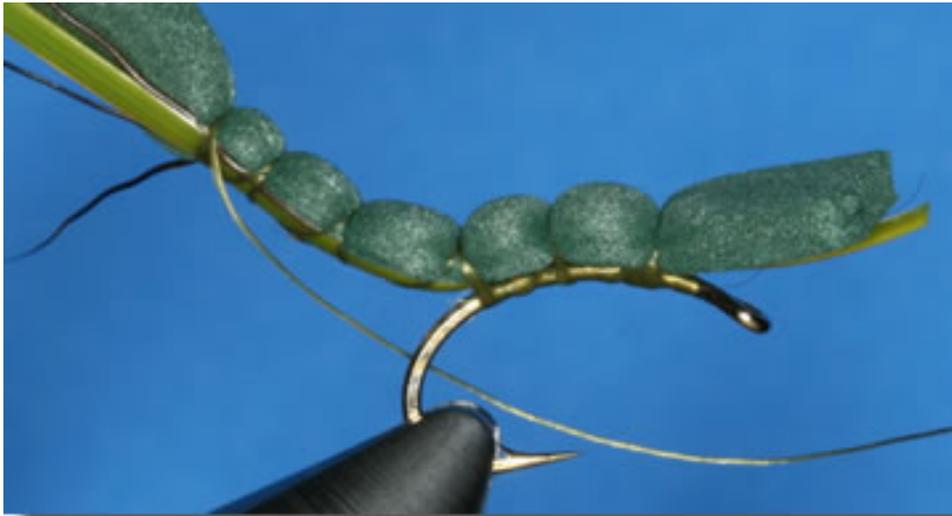
3. Tie on three moose hairs that are three times body length on top of Swannadaze. Trim butts of hair in front of tie down point.



4. Tie in 2-inch long piece of foam with some sticking past eye of hook like the Swannadaze



5. To make the 2 segments on hook move the thread rearward under the hook to above the point of hook, then two or three wraps over the foam to make a bump. Pull the thread rearward again under the hook to a point just over the barb. Then make two or three winds over the foam to complete the second bump.



6. Pinch foam, moose hair and Swannadaze together like a sandwich. Pull the thread rearward and wind thread over foam, swannadaze and moose hair but not hook to make a bump about the same size as the two on the hook. Then wind the thread a couple of times over foam, Swannadaze and moose hair to secure the bump. Repeat two more times making each bump a little smaller than the previous one. Put extra thread winds on the last segment.



7. Cut off foam leaving a little wedge.



8. Fold Swannadaze back over the foam, and wind thread over the folded Swannadaze, foam and moose hair. Put two or three thread winds at each segment. Continue back to the first tie down point.



9. At the segment nearest the eye make a loop in the Swannadaze and secure it in position.



10. Cut extra foam and Swannadaze near eye, and cut off corners of foam a little to taper it.



11. Select a dyed grizzly saddle feather with barbs that are less than gap width long, and secure it both behind and in front of loop. The color was olive with a little brown.



12. Wrap feather 10 times around post and secure under all the wraps. He likes a thick but not high parachute. Lift up head and whip finish on the eye of the hook. Easier on curved scud hook than on a straight shank hook. Trim excess feather.

Closing comments: The color of green drakes is different on different rivers so use any color foam to match. Tie it in larger sizes and colors for stone flies. My travels have never coincided with a green drake hatch, but I have a few in my fly box just in case.

Please Credit FFF Website or FFF Clubwire with any use of the pattern.
You can direct any questions or comments to FOM at flyofthemonth@fedflyfishers.org