

Reverse Hackle Adams



By Bob Bates

Joel Popham from Spokane Valley, Washington has caught many northern Idaho fish with this pattern. In fact he said he ties most of his floating flies with this technique. He showed us how to tie it at the Western Rocky Mountain Council (FFF) Fly Fishing Exposition in West Yellowstone, Montana, June 30, 2007. He learned it from Al Beatty. You can tie it to imitate any mayfly just match the color and size. It is mostly a stream pattern, but it can be used in lakes also. The style of tying the wings has been around for several years, but few people take advantage of it. One of its attributes is that the wings are somewhat transparent like real mayflies, and it also gives a suggestion of the veins in a mayfly wing. This is also called a Wonder Wing.

Fish the pattern with a floating line and leader suitable for the situation. As always cast to make a drag free float. An upstream reach cast is a big help. Sometimes mending the line is necessary. However, mending will often cause a momentary break in the drag free float so you want to do it carefully. If the fish are hitting skidding insects, forget what I said above, and skate the fly a little.

Material list:

Hook: Any dry fly hook, sizes 10 to 18. This one is on a 14

Thread: 8/0

Tail: Deer hair

Body: Light hair's ear dubbing (match color of bugs)

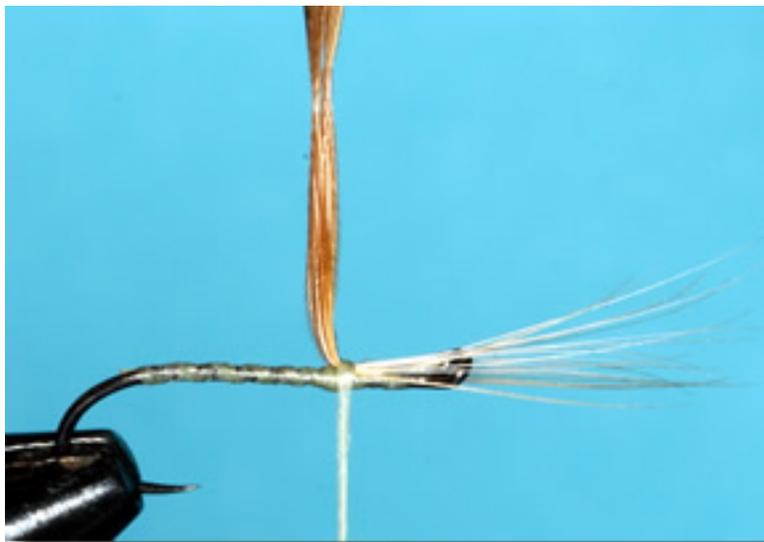
Wing: Brown or other bug matching color

Hackle: Brown or other bug matching color

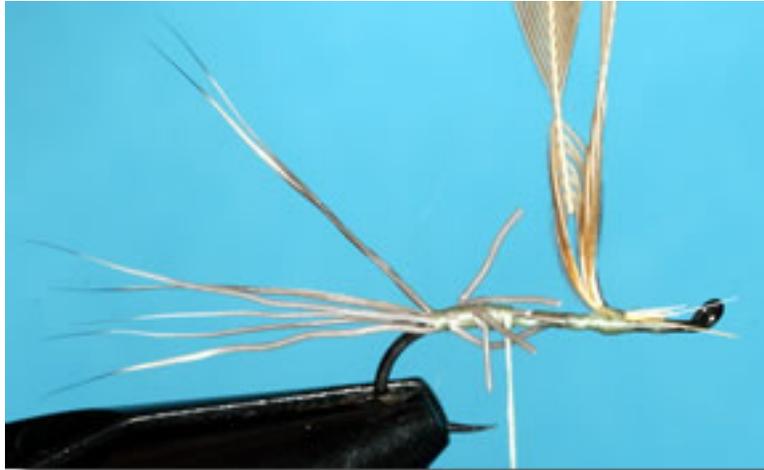
Tying steps:



1. Pinch the barb with smooth jaw pliers before tying if you want to go barbless. Put a thread base on the shank, and then bring the thread to a point 1/3 rd shank length back from the eye. Pick two large hackles, and cut the stems to get rid of the fuzzy part of the feather. Match them face to face (shiny side to shiny side), and stroke about 1/2 shank length of the barbs away from the tips. Tie on to shank with a loose wrap. (Some tiers use 3/4 shank length.)



2. Pull both wings straight up until the wing is about a shank length long. Make sure both wings are on top of the hook. Put on a couple more thread winds to secure the wings. Clip the wings into a gallows tool to hold the wings up and out of the way as other steps are taken.



3. Trim forward pointing barbs. Move the thread to bend of hook and tie in deer hair to make about a shank length tail.



4. Put a light coating of dubbing on the thread. Wrap it forward and back as needed to build up the body a little. Also make it tight against the back of the wing. Put on a few extra thread winds if necessary to keep the wings vertical.



5. Select a hackle of proper size, cut off the butt, trim a few barbs, secure it behind the wing and move the thread to in front of the wing. Make two tight turns of hackle behind the wing and two turns in front of the wings. Tie off hackle in front of wings.



6. Trim excess hackle. Put a little dubbing in front of the hackle. Trim wings and separate them.

Closing comments: Hair's ear dubbing frequently makes a messy looking fly, but fish seem to like them. Sometimes a perfect fly will be refused, but a shaggy one will be accepted with gusto. Tie a few of these for your favorite stream or lake and give them a try when it is legal to do so. (As I write this there is snow on the ground.)

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

