

TAK'S CRYSTAL MIDGE



By Bob Bates

There are thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of midge (chironomid) patterns. Every time I turn around my friends have a new chironomid pattern that is a better fish catcher than the old one. At the 2009 Federation of Fly Fishers Conclave in Loveland, Colorado I stopped at Rich Takahashi's table to see what he was demonstrating. Guess what, it was another midge pattern. However, this one is a little different. It is different by the way the body and rib are put on and how it is finished with a body coating that is cured with ultra-violet light.

Fishing a chironomid can take many paths. One is to use a sink-tip or full sinking line, let the line and fly sink to where you think the fish are. Sometimes, but not always, a fish finder can help locate these fish. If you don't have one you can start out with usual rule: "At or one foot off the bottom." The retrieve can be a slow hand twist or a variety of strip pause retrieves.

Many anglers do as some say "go bobber fishin" which is another name for using a strike indicator. The length of leader and tippet between the fly and strike indicator puts the fly just above the bottom. All you have to do is watch the bobber, and hope that it does something other than just sit there. If the strike indicator sinks give the rod a long sweeping strike to straighten out the 90 degree bend between the fly line and leader. If you are fishing in 10 to 20 feet of water a quick short strike will not do the job.

A few years ago I was fishing in 5 feet of water and using a slow retrieve. My fly was at 4 feet, and no fish were interested. Then the WIND made me throw a bow tie in the leader, which left the fly at 2 feet below the surface. Fish started hitting the fly on almost every cast. So it was good that I didn't stay near the bottom as the rule dictated.

Also remember with bobber fishing a fish will usually hit as you are pouring a cup of coffee or watching an eagle fly by.

Materials list:

Hook: Tiemco TMC 2302 – size 10 to 22

Thread: Uni 8/0, white

Abdomen and rib: Stretch Magic, 0.5 mm, Olive or Clear

Top Wingcase: Mirage tinsel, large

Side Wingcase: Biots, brown or color to match the natural

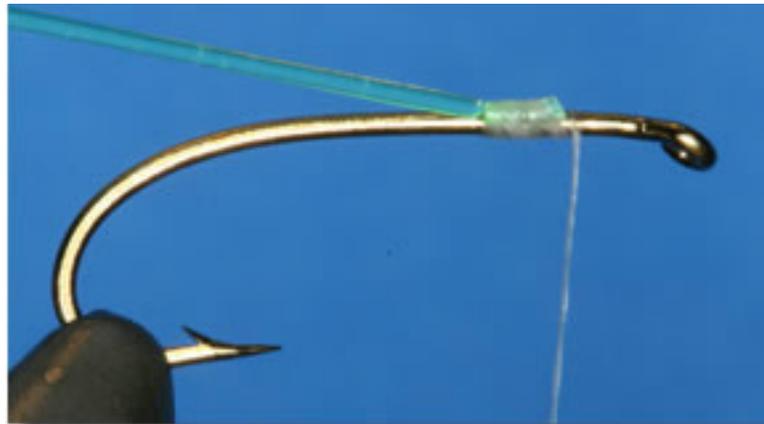
Gills: Oral-B ultra floss, white

Protective Coating: Loon Fly Finish Clear

Tying steps:



1. Attach thread about three eye widths behind eye.



2. Secure Stretch Magic with about two eye widths of thread, and return thread to original tie in point.



3. Put some tension on the Stretch Magic and wind it rearward to a point beyond the barb.



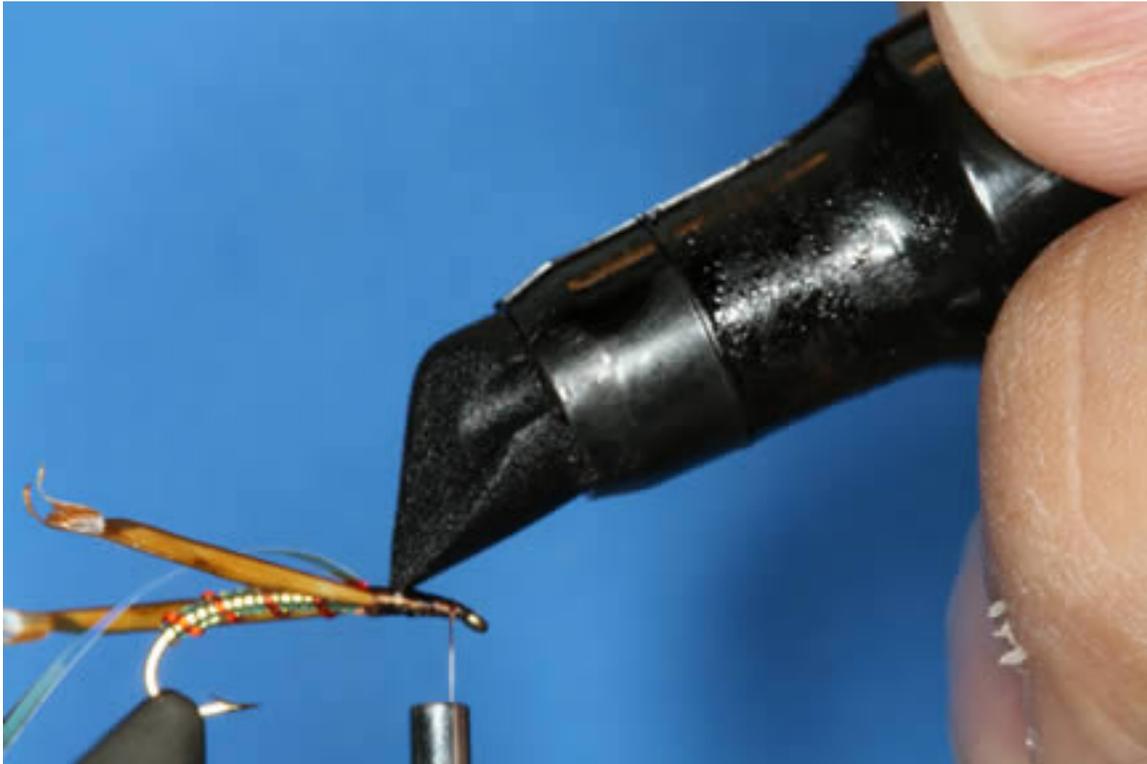
4. Hold up the Stretch Magic and color it with a dark color marker. On this fly Rick used a red marker.



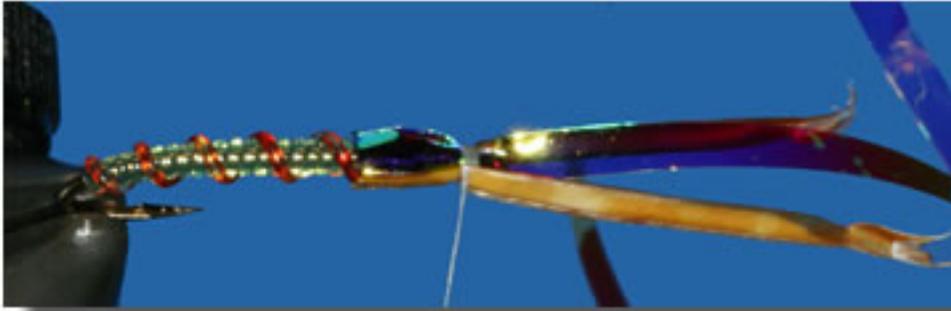
5. Spiral the rib forward, secure and trim.



6. Attach clear tinsel on top of hook and wind thread forward. Attach a brown biot on each side of hook. Have the concave curve on the biots to the outside



7. Wind thread forward to one eye width from the eye. Then use a dark permanent marker, and color all the way around the thorax.



8. Bring the tinsel forward, secure, then move biots forward and secure. The biots represent the developing wingcase.



9. Trim off excess tinsel and biots.



10. Attach breathing gills with a figure eight wind at the front of the wingcase. Rick used poly yarn until a friend told him about Oral-B ultra floss.



11. Whip finish behind the gills, trim thread and trim gills short.



12. Coat abdomen and wingcases with Loon Fly Finish. Expose to ultra violet light for a few seconds until the plastic sets. Several uv-cure products indicate that the plastic will cure in direct sunlight. However, it will not cure if the sunlight is filtered by glass.

This mimics the chironomids that are more transparent than the solid black, olive, etc. species we frequently see. The acrylic plastic sets much quicker than any of the solvent evaporation cements. If the Stretch Magic is not in your fly shop; look for it in craft or scrapbook supply stores. I guess the message here is to explore a little for material that can be used for fly tying. The fish don't know that you didn't find it in a fly shop.

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