

### CHIRONOMID THREAD FLY



By Bob Bates

#### Comments:

British Columbia, Canada is a hot bed of chironomid fishing activity. Nowhere is it stronger than in Castlegar, B.C. It certainly seemed that way watching several demonstration tiers showing their chironomid patterns at the 11<sup>th</sup> Fly Fishing Symposium, March, 2010. Ken Lactin showed us this simple one and several other of his chironomid patterns.

“Chironomid” is a big word for a very tiny insect. It looks like a mosquito, but it doesn’t bite. A large one might be the size of a size 8 or 10 hook, and a small one the size of a 34 or 36 hook or smaller. Two nice things about them are they can hatch anytime there is open water, and there are massive hatches in many parts of the world. In some places, cars driving through a hatch become so covered their drivers have to stop to clean the windshield to continue. Take a look at this picture of the front bumper of a car that drove through a small Sprague Lake hatch in Washington.



Anglers in Castlegar, B.C. catch trout with all sizes of flies and several methods. On the sizes, one fellow used a size 18 or 20 fly in 60 feet of water to catch a 15-pound rainbow. Hard to

believe, but true. I heard the story from several friends who were fishing the lake when he did it. The angler with him that day says it happened and corrected my size 24 hook rumor to size 18 or 20 hook.

Hanging the fly under a bobber (oops Strike Indicator) is the most common angling technique. The strike indicator can be a Corky with a tooth pick, foam with a sticky back, foam float with a special tooth pick, a clump of poly with a spring loaded clamp, poly on a plastic ring or just a piece of yarn. Each has its proponents. The objective is to set the strike indicator so the fly is a foot above the bottom. Then you watch the strike indicator for any unusual movement such as rapidly sinking or moving in a strange direction. Frequently this happens when you are pouring coffee or just took a bite of your sandwich. It is also interesting if you are using a tooth pick system in 17 feet of water.

Some anglers on lakes where two rods are permitted will cast with one rod and let the fly sink while they are slowly retrieving the other. They do this in 20 plus feet of water and no strike indicator, only leader.

The DANGLING technique was described in the August, 2010 Fly of the Month.

The above techniques require anchoring your floating device at both ends so it doesn't swing on the anchor rode. How you anchor a float tube is at both ends is up to you.

The final presentation method is dredging. Cast a full sinking line, let it sink to near the bottom and slowly retrieve the line. If you do not dredge up weeds once in a while you are not deep enough. Counting down the line is a good way to control the depth. The advantage is that you have a direct connection to the fish.

**Materials list:**

**Hook:** Tiemco TMC2499SP-BL, size 18

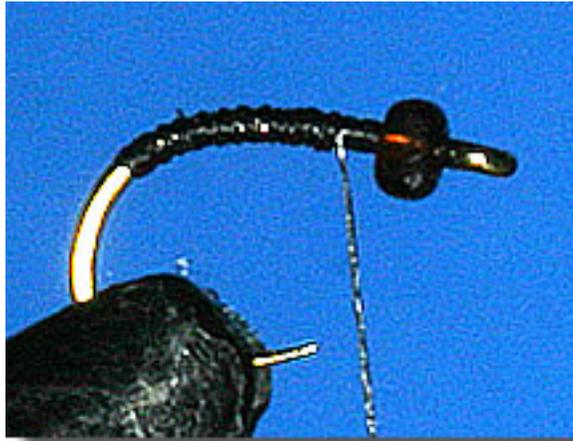
**Bead:** Small glass, black

**Thread:** 8/0 UNI-Thread, black

**Rib:** Wire, x-small, red, silver, copper

**Body:** Thread

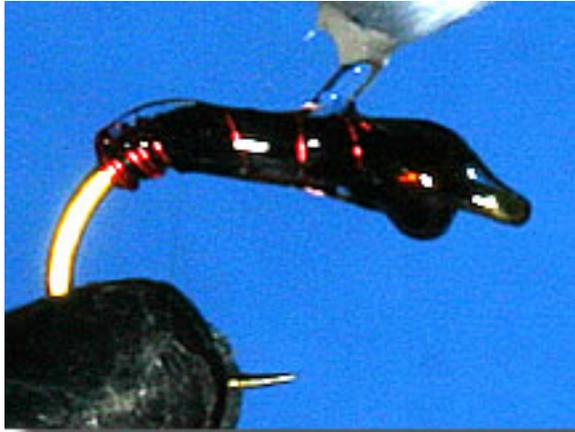
**Tying steps:**



1. Slide bead onto hook, start thread behind bead, wrap thread around bend and back to bead.



2. Hold wire on top of hook, wind thread over it to around bend and back to bead. Closely wrap wire around hook a 2 or 3 times then spiral forward in 3 or 4 turns and secure behind bead. Trim or break off wire.



3. Coat with Sally's Hard as Nails or equivalent. Let it dry. Coat with Super Glue for protection and to keep the nail polish from yellowing.



4. Go Fishing

**Closing comments:** Ken uses Frog Hair leader. It is thin enough to tie a size 20 fly on 6-pound test Frog Hair, and it is still flexible. He matches the thread color to the chironomid color: green for green chironomids, brown for brown chironomids, etc. He also uses metal beads, but he said that small metal beads are hard to come by. These are easy to tie and they work. Tie a few dozen, and go fishing.

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](mailto:flyofthemonth@fedflyfishers.org)