

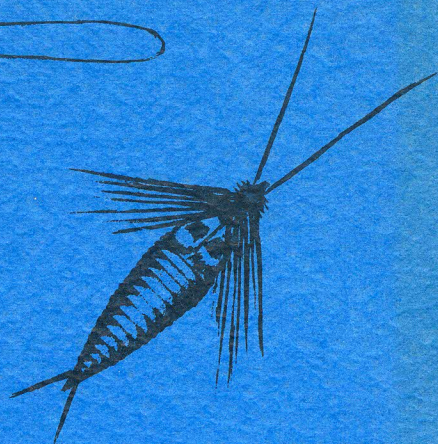


THE ART

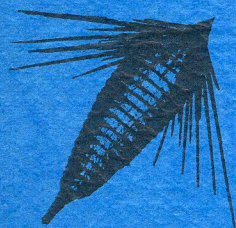
WEAVING

HAIR

HACKLES



FOR TROUT FLIES



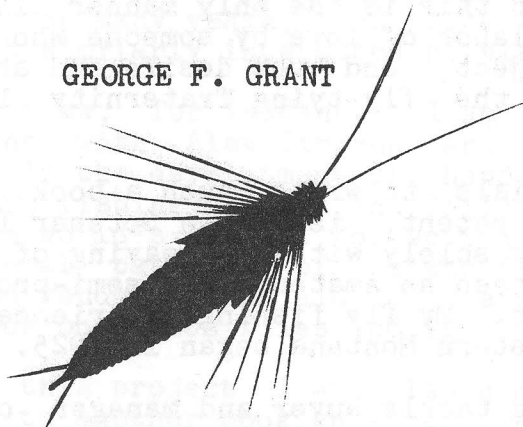
- THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE
- THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLY
- THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPH
- THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR DRY FLY
- THE WESTERN BULLHEAD & MINNOW

GEORGE F. GRANT

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* The Art of *
*
* WEAVING HAIR HACKLES *
*
* for Trout Flies *
*

by

GEORGE F. GRANT



Drawings by the Author

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Typing by the Author

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First Printing
1971

FOREWORD

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

This is a "do-it-yourself" book (as it relates to the author) devoted to the revelation in print for the first time of the western art of weaving hair and fibre hackles for trout flies, together with instructions on the construction of fly body types that are distinctly western in concept, and which have never been adequately dealt with in print prior to this time.

A book, such as this, dealing with a highly specialized and technical phase of fly tying, is never destined to make the best seller list, and this is the only manner in which it could ever be published, -- a labor of love by someone who has a knowledge of this little-known subject, and the desire and ability to convey it to that segment of the fly-tying fraternity interested in all phases of the art.

My credentials to write such a book are not without proper foundation. My patent, issued in October 1939, is the only one in existence dealing solely with the weaving of hackles for artificial flies. I have been an amateur and semi-professional fly-tyer for about forty years. My fly fishing experience on the famous Big Hole River in southwestern Montana began in 1925.

As fishing tackle buyer and manager of one of Montana's largest wholesale-retail sporting goods stores for a period of about twenty years I received the opportunity to discuss and examine a greater quantity and variety of trout flies than is given to most individuals. This book reveals at least some of the knowledge gained in the better-part of a lifetime of association on an intimate basis with fly-fishing and fly-tying.

The flies described in this book, the method of hackling, and the materials used in hackle and body formation, are all such a distinct and radical departure from accepted practice that it may be difficult for fly-tyers to take them seriously. At the risk of failing to display proper modesty in discussing the quality of these flies let me say that I would not hesitate to place them on display alongside the products of the acknowledged experts of the fly-tying world with any fear that they would suffer by comparison.

The art work in this book does not do justice to the flies, -- in most cases it is grossly enlarged to show detail. There are cases where the sketch, in minor detail, will not square with the

FOREWORD (cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
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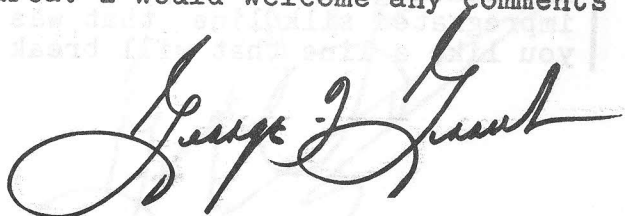
text, and I ask that you be lenient with an "artist" who never essayed to draw a picture of anything prior to the preparation of this book. I can only say that the actual fly is in every instance superior in appearance to the line drawing.

I am no longer engaged in commercial fly tying, except on a very limited basis necessitated by previous commitments, but am far more interested in furthering my own ideas relative to the woven-hair hackle and the use of synthetic materials in the formation of both hackles and bodies for artificial flies, a subject which has occupied my attention for many years, and which has led me into an exchange of ideas with similarly interested people in many places.

At the present time, for instance, I am engaged in a very interesting experiment with Alex Simpson and his son, Colin, of Aberdeen, Scotland, in the development of hand-woven "prismatic" wing flies for salmon fishing. Alex and Colin are possessors of what is probably the world's largest collection of salmon flies, are designers of several patterns of salmon flies for the royal family of Britain, and rendered much aid to Joe Bates in the preparation of his new book on salmon flies and fishing.

In addition to this project I am also engaged in applying the finishing touches to another book entitled, "ROCKY MOUNTAIN FLY PATTERNS", which will also include other western patterns suitable for use in this region. The great Pott "Mite" flies will be discussed in depth for the first time and anyone having this volume on the art of weaving hair hackles will be able to tie them properly. The book not only contains authentic dressings, but deals with origin, history, romance, intent of originator when known or surmised, analysis of construction, recommendations on use, and any other information considered to be either useful or interesting.

In the process of accumulating the information for the above book I have assembled a rather complete collection of authentic western trout flies and am now occupied with the task of preparing display panels of these flies to be shown in various public places, and at sportsmens' shows and fly fishermens' gatherings whenever the opportunity arises, with the thought in mind that they will ultimately form the nucleus of a "Western Fly Fishing Museum" to be located somewhere in the Yellowstone Park area. I would welcome any comments or ideas in this respect.



PROPHECY

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
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WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

It is the considered opinion of the writer that the basic principle of the method of weaving hair hackles discussed in this book will eventually form the basis for a related mechanized process that will produce hackles by the yard, like chenille, and will revolutionize fly-tying as we know it today. It lacks only the ideal artificial fibre in endless lengths and the inventive genius to create a weaving machine to produce such hackles. A simple conversion of existing brush-manufacturing or fabric-weaving machines would probably suffice.

We are all aware of the growing shortage of materials necessary for the construction of trout flies. Even such a commonplace item as a grizzly hackle neck of dry fly quality is becoming scarce at any price. Jungle Cock has been taken off the import list, and the feathers of other wild birds are unobtainable. As industrial growth continues wooded areas that provided sanctuary for squirrels and other small animals will disappear and so will they. Wild life conservationists, and I am one of them, will demand that restrictions be placed on the destruction of our remaining birds and mammals, and all of this will mean that the quantity fly producer will have to seek artificial substitutes.

Fly fishing has always been surrounded with an atmosphere of mystery and superstition to a greater degree than any other sport and I must confess to having fallen under its spell on more than one occasion. The split bamboo fly rod is an excellent illustration of how one of fly-fishing's fondest traditions has been completely demolished by a product of chemistry. There are those who will argue that fiberglass can never duplicate the action of a fine split-bamboo rod, but I am convinced that even if bamboo of top quality was again available in quantity it would not replace fiberglass simply because the manufacturing process of the latter material is less complicated and its availability more constant. If this were not enough, there is the further fact that fiberglass fly rods in fine quality are superior to split-bamboo.

Today you occasionally read the lament of an old-time fly fisherman about the unavailability of a good silk fly line, and I admit that I used them for years and thought they were wonderful. Now we have nylon fly lines with a plastic jacket and if you want a floating line they will outfloat and outcast the finest oil-impregnated silk line that was ever made. If, on the other hand, you like a line that will break the surface and fish a wet fly deep

PROPHECY (cont'd)

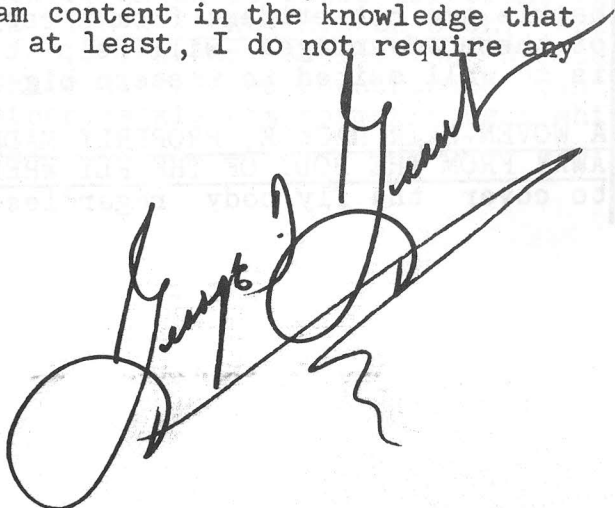
THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
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ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

the tough-finish dacron line made in varying degrees of density will do the job better than the earlier silk line, another triumph of the laboratory over nature.

For years after the advent of nylon leader material I continued to use silkworm gut because my first trials of nylon resulted in knot slippage. There was no real standard of quality with Spanish Silkworm Gut and, except for drawn gut, there was no uniformity of size. It came in short lengths that had to be soaked before they could be knotted together, and the finished leaders had to be carried in a soak box on the stream. If you walked a considerable distance from one riffle to another the leader on the line dried out and before it became soaked again you probably broke your fly off in a good fish. After you got through fishing you put them in the soak box and forgot about them until the next time you went fishing and then found that they were rotted or weakened from oversoaking. I suffered through all this for years until a man showed me a knot that wouldn't slip and another of nature's products vanished from my fishing tackle.

These are examples of what has happened to the rod, the line, and the leader. We are now down to the fly and for most fishermen this has remained substantially inviolate to this time, buoyed by tradition, and retained as before because there were seemingly no materials to replace the established ones. We are beginning to see some concessions to scarcity and practicability. For example, the use of Mohlon yarn to replace the slower and more difficult spinning of animal fur on waxed thread; the use of metallic piping tubing to slip over the hook shank to replace tinsel; the marking of white hackles with black waterproof ink to simulate grizzly and badger hackles.

If every natural material now available were to be withdrawn from the market this day it would not concern me in the least as most of my own personal flies have been made with synthetic materials for over thirty years, and I am content in the knowledge that for western big-river fly-fishing, at least, I do not require any other kind.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George F. Grant". The signature is written over a horizontal line and includes a large circular flourish at the bottom left.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

HISTORY

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

The most important contribution to the construction of artificial trout flies for western big-river fly fishing in the past fifty years was the invention of the woven-hair hackle.

This outstanding innovation was the brain-child of Franz B. Pott of Missoula, Montana, and was the adaptation of a method of making hair wigs. The hackle was incorporated into an ingenious series of woven-bodied hair flies, known to fishermen throughout the West as "Mite" flies, the most popular patterns being the "Sandy Mite" and "Lady Mite", although the entire series consists of over thirty excellent patterns.

These hand-woven hair flies are, without doubt, the most consistently successful trout flies for western fishing that have ever been devised, and their success is due in large part to the woven-hair hackle. The truth of this statement is proven by the fact that while imitators have been able to duplicate the woven-hair bodies with great fidelity few have been able to reproduce the woven-hair hackles. Flies with identical bodies and hair hackles tied in by any other method just do not produce the results obtained by the original genuine woven-hair hackle patterns.

While Pott was the originator of the woven-hair hackle and held U. S. patents on several features of his various types of hair flies he did not actually patent the weaving method. The only U. S. patent covering the weaving of hair hackles exclusively was issued to the writer in 1939, and has been used by me in the construction of my "Black Creeper" fly for over thirty years. Prior to the use of the woven-hackle on this fly it had been a good fly, but with the addition of the patented hackle it became the extremely effective pattern that it has remained to this day.

ADVANTAGES

The reasons that contribute to the superiority of the woven-hair hackle are not evident from a casual examination, but a brief summary of these advantages will help to reveal why a hackle thus prepared is so well suited to western big-river fly fishing:

A WOVEN-HAIR HACKLE, PROPERLY MADE AND PROPERLY APPLIED, WILL SPRING AWAY FROM THE BODY OF THE FLY WHEN WET, and will not be forced back to cover the fly body regardless of the swiftness of the water or

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

ADVANTAGES (cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

the length of time it is fished. This gives the fly an appearance of being alive, even when fished on a dead drift, and is the main reason for the effectiveness of flies equipped with this type of hackle. There is no way that I know of to duplicate this feature with any other kind of hackling.

Every fly-tyer is aware of the difficulty of securing coarse hair to the shank of a hook by successive bindings of thread. If the hair is coarse and stiff, as it should be for western wet flies, it does not buckle under pressure and remains too flat against the fly body instead of flaring. Hair applied by the binding method is seldom secured with equal stress at all points and has a tendency to gradually lose its individual fibres until the hackle becomes non-existent, but THE HAIR WILL NOT PULL OUT FROM A WOVEN-HAIR HACKLE EVEN AFTER PROLONGED AND REPEATED USE.

It is practically impossible to apply hair to a hook shank by lashing it on with a flexible binding so that it encircles the hook evenly at all points and does not bunch. Any accumulation of fibres at one or more points in the hackle detracts from the lifelike appearance that we are trying to create and which is so essential in wet flies. THE WEAVING METHOD PROVIDES A HACKLE THAT DISTRIBUTES THE HAIR EVENLY AS IT IS WOUND AROUND THE HOOK and causes a space to occur between each fibre, resulting in that sparse appearance that western fly-fishermen have come to recognize as being a prime requisite for effective wet flies.

It is frequently necessary to trim ordinary hair hackles in order to make them conform to the size of the fly to which they are applied, which trimming makes the hackle blunt and tends to lessen the intended similarity between the artificial fly and the natural insect. THE WOVEN-HAIR HACKLE IS MADE WITH EACH HAIR FILAMENT OF THE NECESSARY LENGTH FOR THE SIZE OF THE FLY BEING TIED AND NEEDS NO TRIMMING so the natural tapered ends of the hair are retained.

My own method of weaving a hair hackle, which is quite different from the Pott system, PRODUCES A HACKLE WITH A NARROW RIB OR BASE, which is comparable in size to the quill on a feather hackle. The advantage of this thin rib is that a woven-hair hackle so constructed can be used on almost any fly where a feather hackle was formerly used, which includes several types of dry flies.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

HAIR & HAIR SUBSTITUTES

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

The time-honored and tradition-established hairs for the weaving of wet fly hackles are Badger and Ox Hair. Badger is familiar to every tyer of flies and needs little discussion. Ox Hair comes in several shades of color, the most useful being Light and Dark Sandy, Dark Brown and Black. The best way to buy this hair is in bundles with the tapered ends all pointed in the same direction. The extreme length of Badger guard hairs is approximately two and one-half inches, and that of Ox Hair about three inches. Two inch lengths of hair are just about the absolute minimum that can be woven comfortably. Hair purchased in bundles, as described above, is extremely expensive in terms of the pound price, but when considered in the light of the number of flies that can be tied from an ounce it is really not excessive. Buying Badger hair on the skin is false economy as it is usually of poor quality and the work of extracting the guard hair is tedious.

In the case of a professional tyer, or any tyer who wishes to adhere strictly to established pattern, it is necessary to have a supply of Badger and Ox Hair, but, for many years, I have departed from these standard hairs and have used other hairs and hair substitutes that I consider to have definite advantages, as well as being much more readily available and considerably cheaper.

When I was developing my "Black Creeper" and related nymph-body wet flies I felt that an even coarser and stiffer hair than had been previously used was required. Nothing, of course, was available as fly-tying supply houses have never carried any of the stiff hair necessary for hackles for western big-river wet flies. At that time I turned to the use of Chinese Boar Bristle, obtained by purchasing large-size paint brushes, and, for years following, hackled my flies with this material. Later, when genuine bristle became difficult to secure and consequently quite expensive, I began to use tapered Tynex nylon. This commercial fibre requires further sanding to reduce the tip-ends to a finely-tapered point, but in all other respects it is equal to natural bristle, and I now use it exclusively on all my own personal wet flies.

This material is available in fine-end diameters of .008, .005, and .004, which is an adequate range of sizes for weaving hackles for wet flies from Size 2 to 12. It comes in Black or Natural (which can easily be dyed any color) and in lengths from two and one-half to six inches. "Tynex" sorts and weaves easily and hackles made from it are highly effective and extremely durable.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

HAIR & HAIR SUBSTITUTES
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

The best hair for the weaving of hair hackles for dry flies is body hair of the northern whitetail deer. Inasmuch as each hair is hollow it has an inherent floating quality unequalled by any other hair or synthetic fibre. Conversely, it is the most difficult hair to sort and weave, and it lacks durability in use. In sorting, preparatory to weaving, it has a tendency to want to cling to the fingers, clothing and everything else in a manner that is most frustrating. In weaving it is tender and brittle, and its use should only be attempted after the weaving process has been mastered with other fibres and a delicate weaving touch has been achieved.

The weaving process is further compounded by the fact that deer body hair can seldom be obtained in lengths exceeding two inches and this is the absolute minimum that can be woven in this particular type of hair. I have never found any of the other hollow hairs such as elk and caribou, to be as good as deer. The general color of the completed hackle is tan and gray with a few flecks of black, and the fly itself when held in the hand or observed on the water presents a most natural appearance.

The next most useful hair for the production of woven-hair hackle dry flies is obtained from the largest Canadian Fox and Gray Squirrel tails. The hair on these tails must be at least two inches long near the base for if it is sufficiently long at that point it will be slightly progressively longer as you work toward the tip, which must be discarded as the long hair here is too scraggly to be suitable for dry fly hackle. The texture of this hair varies and only those tails with firm, straight, distinctly-barred hair should be selected. If you deal with a reputable firm and tell them what you want their preliminary selection will reduce the discard to a minimum, and if you tie other squirrel tail types the entire lot can be used.

Squirrel tail hair does not possess the inherent floating qualities of hollow deer hair, but it does have other qualities that make it highly desirable. It is quite readily available in the necessary length, and its texture makes it much more easy to sort and weave than deer hair. Also, it is more durable in use and provides two natural colors that are compatible with natural insect life, and, even more important, colors that are visible to the angler when the fly is on the water.

Another hair that I have used extensively for woven-hair hackle dry

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

HAIR & HAIR SUBSTITUTES
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

flies is select Badger. These long guard hairs are considerably stiffer than deer or squirrel, more durable than either, and about equal to squirrel for buoyancy. The hair is easier to weave than the other two and does not require as many ties per hackle to produce the required lateral length of hackle for the size of the fly that is being tied.

This results in a completed dry fly in which the individual fibres of the applied hackle are more widely spaced and the fly is less "bushy" than deer or squirrel hair dry flies. This is not necessarily an objectionable feature and may even be preferred by some.

There is a material catalogued by one of this country's leading fly-tying supply houses known as "Hairlon", which is, of course, extremely fine nylon (.003). I have been experimenting with this material in the weaving of dry fly hackles for several years and believe that this or some similar synthetic fibre will ultimately supplant all existing natural hair for woven dry fly hackles just as I have turned to Tynex nylon for use on wet flies. "Hairlon" is also suitable for small wet fly hackles and is ideal for making woven and braided fly bodies.

Skunk Tail Hair and Moose Mane can be used for wet fly hackles, and there are undoubtedly other hairs and fibres of which I have little or no knowledge that could be used. An artificial fibre with water-repellent attributes would be excellent for dry flies if it could be found. Once the actual mechanics of weaving have been mastered it will be found that there is scarcely any hair or fibre that can not be woven, the limitations being dependent upon length and flexibility.

TOOLS

The tools necessary for the weaving of hair hackles are few, and, with one or two exceptions, are possessed by almost every active fly-tyer. A good vise is the first necessity. I have always used the Thompson "A" vise, but any model with adjustable jaws and a thumb screw at the base that allows the vise to be rotated on its vertical shaft, will suffice.

A glance at the illustration (Fig. 1 - Mechanics of Weaving) will show that a fixed upright post of some sort is also necessary so that the weaving thread can be stretched taut between the vise and this post. I use a Thompson thread-waxing device with the thread-holding

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

TOOLS (cont'd)

bar fixed in an upright position. There is no question that many other devices could be used or constructed for this purpose, but this one is entirely adequate and easily obtained.

The pliers used to hold the hair during the weaving process is a surgeon's vein forceps. These come in various sizes but the smallest and lightest obtainable is the best for reasons that will become obvious to the operator as he progresses with his weaving. These forceps are also used as a measuring device to determine the length of the individual hackle filaments and this simple procedure will be discussed as we get into the actual weaving instructions.

A spool of "C" (.008) black nylon thread is good to start with as it is almost impossible to break this size during the weaving operation, and it is the most useful for many types of wet fly and nymph hackles. A pair of straight blade scissors and a Thompson duplex hackle plier would complete the tool requirements.

MECHANICS OF SORTING

The proper sorting and preparation of the hair prior to weaving is the difference between success and failure. Unless it is done correctly and thoroughly the actual weaving process is made infinitely more difficult.

STEP 1 - Procure a small flat bottle cap, such as one from the top of a wide-mouth fly head cement bottle, and fill it with clear celluloid enamel. Almost any thin, quick-drying cement or glue could be used, but I prefer celluloid because it does not thicken too quickly and dries with a flexible rather than a brittle texture.

STEP 2 - Also secure a small book (6" x 8" x 1/2") and place it to your left on the sorting table. The size is actually immaterial but this size would be convenient. Later you might want to rig up a small piece of plywood of this size with a knob in the center for ease of handling when sorted full of "hair sticks".

STEP 3 - Let us assume that you have a small bundle of Badger hair with all tapered ends pointed in the same direction. Select a group of hairs of about 1/4" thickness from the larger bundle and even the tapered ends by tapping them gently on the table top. Grasp the small group by the tapered ends with left hand and stroke out the short

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

THE MECHANICS OF SORTING
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

hairs and any fluff with the right hand. The butt ends will now be uneven so without releasing your grip on the tip ends trim the butt ends with scissors just enough to make them square across.

STEP 4 - The group should now be transferred to the right hand and held between the first finger and thumb, flattening the hair as much as possible, allowing about 1" of the tip ends to protrude. (Fig. 1).

STEP 5 - With the left hand pull the main portion of the hairs to the left, allowing 5 to 7 hairs to remain on the extreme right. (Fig. 2).

The number of hairs is just an estimate, but it should not vary too much from this range. There is a tendency to make the individual groups too large in order to reduce the number of weaving operations necessary to form the required length of hackle, but this results in flies that do not have the sparse look for which we are striving.

STEP 6 - These 5 to 7 hairs are then pulled free with the left hand (Fig. 3), exercising care not to disturb the main group. The butt ends of the hairs you have removed are moistened to draw them together and then dipped to a depth of about 1/4" in the shallow container of celluloid enamel (Fig. 6).

STEP 7 - This group of "wet-end" hairs is then laid on the book to your left with the enameled ends projecting clear of the edge where it will remain until dry. As each group is dipped in the enamel it will be placed at about 1/4" intervals along the book edge taking great care to avoid contact among the sticky ends. (Fig. 5).

STEP 8 - The sorting process, as described, will be repeated until the bunch of hairs you are holding has been exhausted, which should give you approximately 15 individual sets, or enough for one average wet fly hackle.

NOTE 1 - It will be noted in Step 6 it is stated "the butt ends of the hairs you have removed are moistened to draw them together", but you are not advised as to how this is done. My own method is to pass these hairs between my lips and in some forty years of tying these flies I have suffered no apparent ill effects from so doing. A more sanitary, even if slower and slightly less convenient method, would be to have another bottle cap filled with water alongside the enamel and dip first into the water and then into the enamel.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

MECHANICS OF SORTING

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
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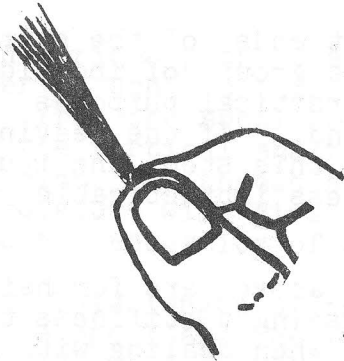


FIG. 1

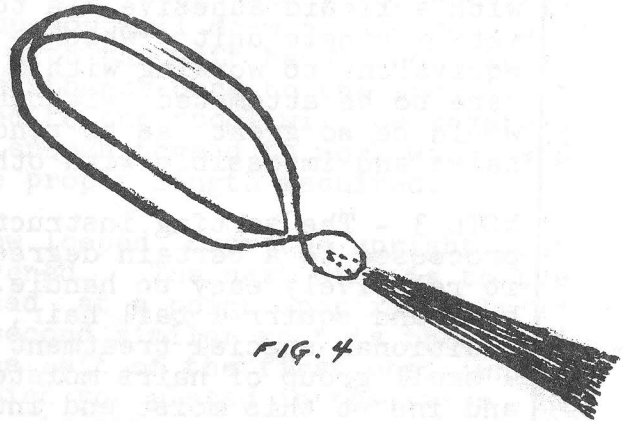


FIG. 4

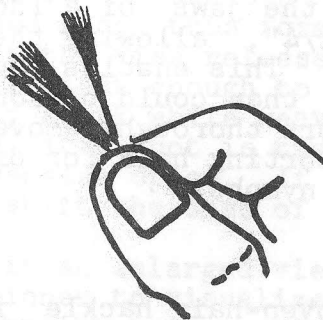


FIG. 2

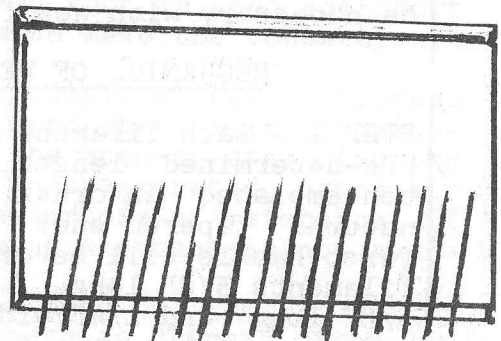


FIG. 5

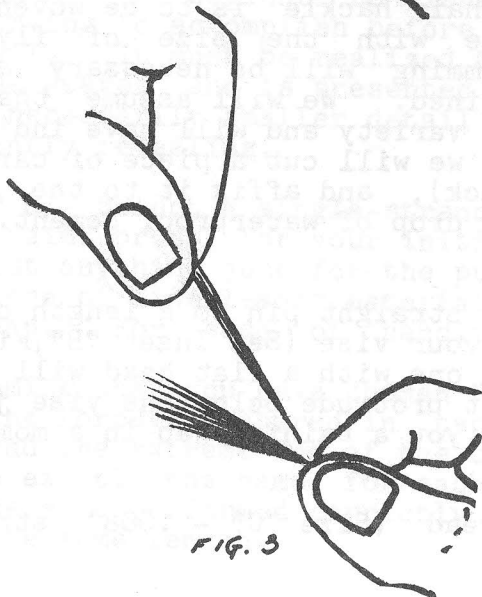


FIG. 3

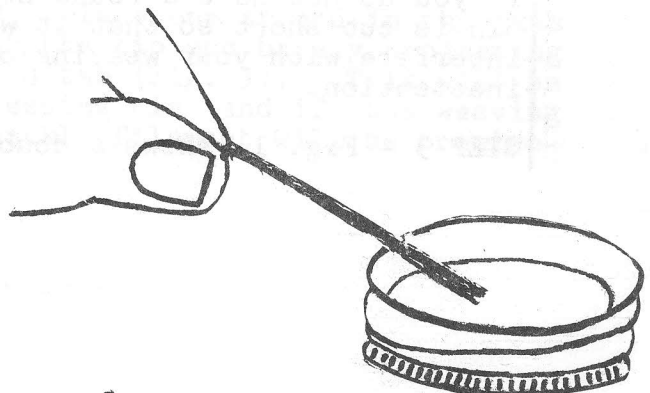


FIG. 6

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

MECHANICS OF SORTING
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
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NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

NOTE 2 - The reason for binding the butt ends of the hair together with a liquid adhesive is to transform a group of individual hairs into a single unit, which, for all practical purposes would be equivalent to working with a single strand. If the weaving process were to be attempted without performing this step the frustrations would be so great as to render the process impracticable with some hairs and impossible with others.

NOTE 3 - The sorting instructions given above are for hair already processed to a certain degree and possessing a stiffness that makes it relatively easy to handle. However, when dealing with deer body hair and squirrel tail hair, which has to be cut from hide or tail, additional special treatment is required. After you have cut loose a small group of hairs moisten the tip ends by any method you prefer and insert this moist end into the jaws of a Thompson Duplex Hackle Plier to an extent of about $1/4$ ", allowing the jaws to close and grip the hair firmly (Fig. 4). This enables you to hold this fine hair more closely to the tips than could be done with your finger and thumb and results in a more thorough removal of short hairs. Greater care must be taken in sorting hair for dry flies than would be necessary with wet flies or nymphs.

MECHANICS OF WEAVING

STEP 1 - Each filament of a woven-hair hackle is to be woven to a pre-determined length commensurate with the size of fly being contemplated in order that no trimming will be necessary and the natural tapered ends will be retained. We will assume that your first hackle will be of the wet fly variety and will have individual filaments $5/8$ " long. Accordingly, we will cut a piece of cardboard $5/8$ " long and $1/4$ " wide (.015 thick), and affix it to the inside rear jaw of the vein forceps with a drop of waterproof cement. (See Inset "A", Fig. 1).

STEP 2 - Cut an ordinary round head straight pin to a length of $1/4$ " and clamp it firmly in the jaws of your vise (See Inset "B", Fig. 1). If you do not have a round head pin one with a flat head will do. The pin is cut short so that it will not protrude below the vise jaws to interfere with your weaving or give you a painful jab in a moment of inattention.

STEP 3 - Fig. 1 shows a double thread (Size "C" - .008) stretched

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLETHE MECHANICS OF WEAVING
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

from an upright post to a pin clamped in a vise, ready for weaving. In order to achieve this thread set-up you will draw the loose end of thread from the spool on the post with the left hand and take it around the vertical shaft of the vise, thence back to the spool, at which point the thread still attached to the spool will be severed. This procedure will give you exactly enough thread to work with and obviate the necessity of guessing the proper length required.

STEP 4 - This length of thread is now looped over the upright post above the spool and the loose ends evened. The next step is to tie an overhand knot in the doubled thread at a point approximately 7" from the post and pull it tight. A second similar knot is then tied in the doubled thread about 2" to the left of the first one, which should bring it close to the pin which you placed in the vise in Step 2. The closed loop, thus formed, is then slipped over the pin, the thumb screw on the vise released, and the vise rotated to the left until the thread is taut enough to "twang" when plucked. Too tight and the thread may break while weaving. Too loose and weaving is difficult. If the first knot is tied too close to the spool you will not have enough weaving space. If the second knot is tied too short you will have to shift the base of the vise to make the connection.

STEP 5 - Fig. 2 is an enlarged view of the complete weaving process to enable the beginner to visualize in his mind what he is ultimately trying to accomplish before going on to the step-by-step weaving detail. It must be realized that this is an exaggerated, extremely loose weave, and is presented also for the purpose of reference if the necessarily smaller detail of the ensuing sketches is not sufficiently revealing.

STEP 6 - Select a single-strand material, such as "Tynex" from an old paint brush, for your initial practice. Actually, you could use almost anything just for the purpose of learning the weaving process; a piece of fine leader material, light-weight casting line, or heavy thread. For ease of handling it should be 3" to 4" in length.

Assuming that you have chosen "Tynex", place one strand in the jaws of the forceps prepared in Step 1 with the tip end barely projecting beyond the extreme end of the cardboard tab (Fig. 3). This will be done exactly the same for each succeeding tie and if the weaving process is performed correctly each hackle filament will be precisely the same length.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLETHE MECHANICS OF WEAVING
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 7 - Now, grasp the butt end of the "Tynex" in your left hand and drop the forceps between the thread strands and pull up tight against the underside of the thread (Fig. 3). In order to facilitate the dropping of the forceps between the weaving strands it will be helpful if the first two fingers of the right hand are placed between the threads from below to widen the opening. This is not shown as it is a natural following-action that would undoubtedly be employed by the weaver as a matter of course.

STEP 8 - Fig. 3 shows complete forceps assembly placed through the weaving threads and drawn up against them. Maintaining this position with the aid of the left hand, which will hold the forceps and the thread simultaneously, you will then grasp the butt end of the Tynex with the right hand, take it away from you over the rear thread, and then bring it forward under both threads (Fig 4).

STEP 9 - From this point the butt end of the "Tynex" is taken by the right hand over the near thread to a point between the threads (Fig. 5) where it is pushed downward between the threads by the forefinger of the left hand (Fig. 6), which has been aiding in maintaining the position of the forceps. It would appear from the sketch (Fig. 5) that the forefinger of the left hand would be too far away to accomplish this downward-push procedure, but in actual practice this finger is much closer to the action. There is considerable distortion in these sketches in deference to showing the course of the strand being woven for if the actual position of the hands were depicted the weaving process would be obscured.

STEP 10 - At this point in the weaving process the butt end of the "Tynex" that has been pushed downward between the threads will be grasped between the thumb and the side of the middle finger of the right hand. This will simultaneously tighten the weaving process already completed and free the forefinger of the right hand, the nail of which will be used to slide the entire assembly along the thread strands to the left against the knot, which serves as a terminal for this and all other subsequent operations. All following weaves will, of course, come to rest against the previous one, but the knot can be likened to a "bumper" that stops a string of freight cars in a railroad switch yard. As the above sliding movement is performed observe if the forceps has remained tight against the thread base as in Fig. 3 for if this position has altered there is still time at this point to bring the forceps flush against the thread by

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLETHE MECHANICS OF WEAVING

(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

pulling on the butt end of the "Tynex". It is evident that if the forceps was not flush against the thread at the completion of each tie you would end up with hackle filaments of varying lengths and there would be little point in using the measuring device in the first place.

STEP 11 - The final phase of the process is to form a half hitch to secure the weave. The butt end of the "Tynex" is taken in the right hand and brought up and over both strands of thread (Fig. 7), held against the near thread with the thumb of the right hand while the forefinger pushes the extreme butt end through the open loop below the double thread where it is grasped by the left hand (Fig. 8). The "Tynex" is then pulled firmly to the left along the double thread, closing the half hitch and snugging it up against the already partially completed weave. A final tightening is accomplished with the thumb nail and forefinger of the left hand, compressing the entire weave against the knot.

STEP 12 - The steps 6 through 11 will be repeated until you have a hackle approximately 1/2" long. The exact number of ties would be dependent upon the thickness of the individual strands. After the desired length has been woven a length of well-waxed "00" thread is placed in the forceps and woven into the double threads in exactly the same manner as the "Tynex" was woven. Snug this thread weave very tightly against the "Tynex" and cut off both ends of the "00" thread as close to the thread base as possible. This thread weave will hold the hackle together while applying it to the hook shank.

STEP 13 - You will now have a double hackle consisting of 5/8" tapered filaments on one side, and the much longer coarse butt ends on the side nearest to you. Grasp all these long ends together in your left hand, pulling them upward until they are in a vertical position, and then cut them straight across, leaving a blunt secondary fringe about 1/4" long (Fig. 9 shows completed hackle).

STEP 14 - To attach the hackle to the hook shank tie in the short end of the double thread (the end with the two overhand knots). Tie in at the shoulder on the near side of the hook next to hackle knot, bind down forward with several tight turns of tying thread, and cut off excess hackle thread. At this time the long fibres of the hackle will be facing you with the short fringe underneath. Wind clockwise, --a 1/2" hackle will usually encircle the hook two and one-half times if the neck of the hook shank has been kept free of body tie-off clutter.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLETHE MECHANICS OF WEAVING
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

The actual winding will be done with the fingers (instead of using hackle pliers) and considerable pressure exerted to insure a solid seating. Each turn will be tight against the last with no open spaces between. If the hackle is wound properly and the tie-off made securely the hackle will remain in place and last longer than the rest of the fly.

NOTE 1 - The above instructions may seem long and involved but the actual weaving process is performed in one smooth, continuous motion that consumes but a few seconds for each tie. During the period 1931-1951, when I was engaged in professional fly-tying, I wove an average of 5,000 of these hackles per year, and, except for the monotony of repetition, enjoyed doing it.

Any fly-tyer can be taught to weave one of these hackles in five minutes of actual supervised instruction.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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HACKLE FOR ARTIFICIAL FISHING FLY
AND METHOD OF MAKING SAME

George F. Grant, Butte, Mont.

Application March 27, 1939, Serial No. 264,450

2 Claims. (Cl. 43—48)

This invention relates to a hackle for artificial fishing flies and the method of making the same.

Hair which is lashed on to the shank of a hook by successive bindings of silk thread expands when wet and forces the binding. The hair dries after use and contracts while the bindings do not return to their original position, resulting in the hair becoming loose and falling out. With these disadvantages in mind it is an object of the present invention to provide a method of constructing a hackle from which the hair will not pull out even after repeated use.

A further object is to produce a method of constructing a hair hackle with a narrow rib or base, which is comparable in size to the quill on a feather hackle. The advantage of this is

of the steps of applying the hackle to the shank of the hook.

Figure 4 is a perspective view showing the weaving of the hair hackle in accordance with the invention.

Referring now to the drawing in which like characters of reference designate similar parts in the various views, as best shown in Figure 4, a silk thread 10 is looped around a fixed upright 11 and a knot 12 is tied near the loose ends. The thread is then stretched tight and the loose ends gripped in the jaws of a vise 13.

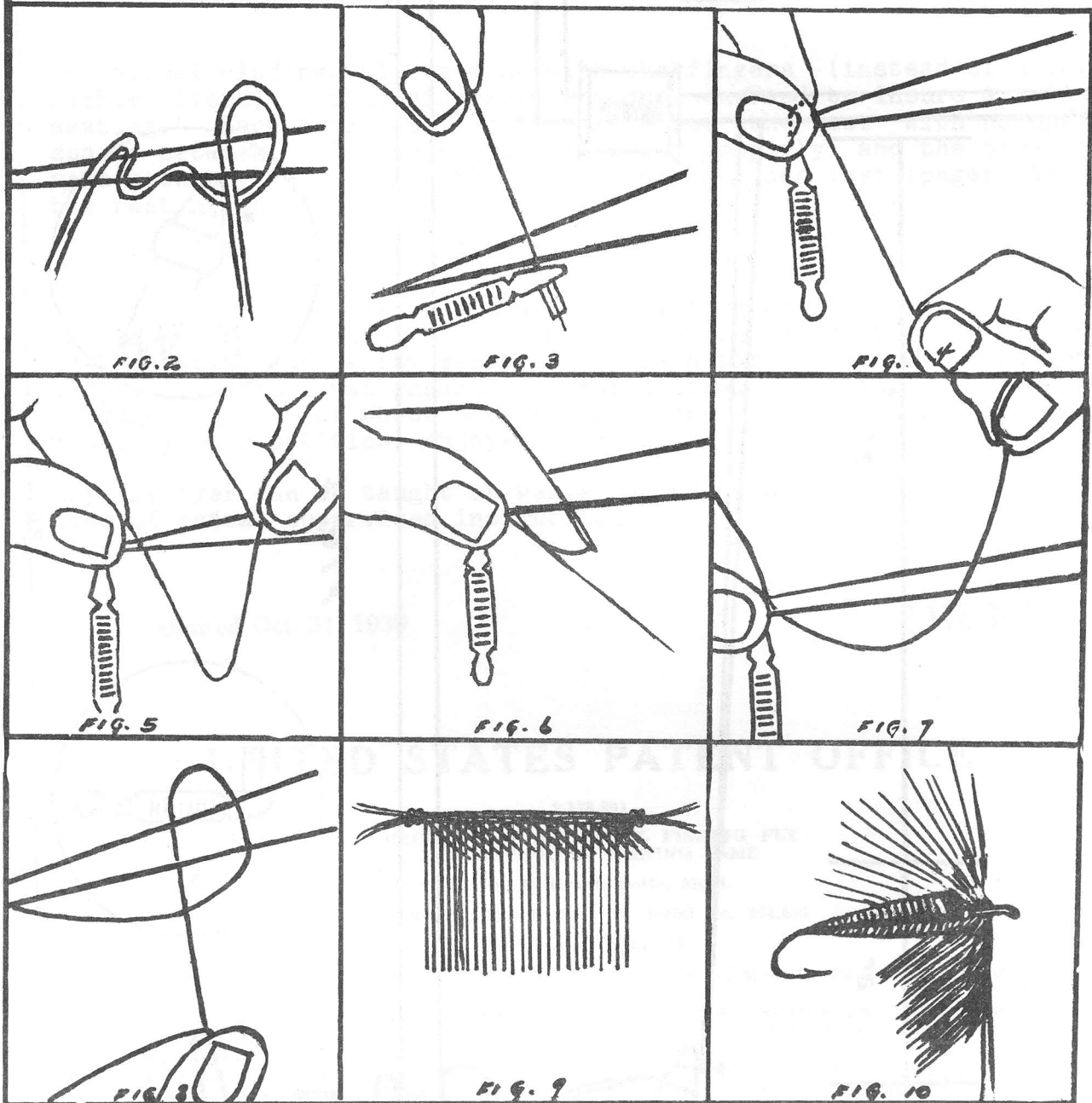
Several strands of hair 14 are now grasped with the fingers of the left hand and the tip or tapering ends of the hair are laid on the flat side of a small ruler, not shown, the tips of the hair

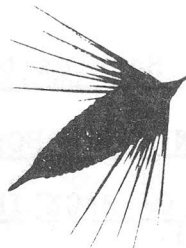


THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR HACKLE

MECHANICS OF WEAVING

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)





THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLY

METHOD OF HACKLING

In view of the fact that ninety per cent of western big-river fly fishing is done with wet flies it is of particular importance that those selected should be well suited for the type of water in which they are to be used.

It is generally recommended that wet flies be tied with soft hackles. This advice usually comes from localities where streams are small and the flies are cast upstream and allowed to return on a slack line. In such cases there is no drag on the line and the fly must be hackled with soft feathers in order that the fibres will open and close as they are played upon by the varying currents.

In Cutcliffe's "Trout Fishing in Rapid Streams", a book written in 1863, the author states:

"All hackles should be plucked from a cock's neck; hen hackles are worse than useless in rapid streams; they have no stiffness, cannot resist the force of water washing on them and consequently lie flat along the hook."

Roger Woolley, writing in his "List of Special Trout and Grayling Flies", (1932), says:

"It may be rank heresy on my part to suggest such a thing, but I put forward here the idea that these flies would prove more attractive to trout if tied with suitable, bright sparkling cock's hackles; in place of the soft, dull-fibred ones that have been used in their make-up from time immemorial; everything would be the same except that a bright, hard-fibred hackle would be used instead of a dull, soft-fibred one."

When it is considered that these eminent English authorities were concerned with the fast, rocky streams of Yorkshire and Devonshire, mere brooks in comparison with the Madison River, it is obvious that flies made with feather hackles are unsuitable for our western rivers where the nature of the water makes it advisable that wet flies be fished down and across stream.

The most successful of all western wet flies are tied with stiff, coarse hair hackles, and, while hair applied to the hook by any means is vastly superior to feather, it is only when a fly is tied with a hand-woven hair hackle that it reaches its full potential.

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLY

METHOD OF HACKLING
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

The entire concept of woven hackles composed of stiff hair or bristle is such a radical departure from time-honored fly-tying tradition that it must be pointed out that they were developed to meet with conditions encountered on large western rivers descending out of mountain canyons with considerable volume and velocity.

Many knowledgeable fly-fishermen, observing these flies for the first time, are skeptical because of the lack of mobility within the fly itself, and it should be emphasized that stiff hair hackle filaments do not derive their effectiveness from the movement of individual fibres, but, when applied to the hook through the medium of a woven-hackle, they present a sparse, insect-like appearance that does not alter materially whether fished in fast or slow water. Others will summarily reject them on the premise that the hackles are too stiff and would either repel the strike or would cause the trout to eject the fly on contact before an effective strike could be made.

On the face of it these appear to be legitimate and logical criticisms, and, in the early 1920's when Franz Pott first introduced his stiff hackle hair flies, they may have caused him some concern, but 45 years of unending demand would seem to have refuted their validity. About 1937, when I first began hackling my large "Black Creeper" pattern with boar bristle, I had some misgivings that perhaps this was carrying the stiff hackle theory too far, but now, after 30 years in which supply has never equalled demand, I can also feel gratified that I was able to produce a more effective fly for existing local conditions by developing and employing a radical departure from established custom.

While these woven-hackle flies were designed specifically to meet western big-river water conditions I feel that similar circumstances exist to some degree in many parts of the world. The weaving method, once disclosed, is so simple and so easily learned that I think it would be interesting for any tyer to explore the possibilities of its use in his particular area.

I believe that one of the great advantages enjoyed by the amateur fly-tyer is that he is primarily concerned with developing flies that deal effectively with specific needs and does not have to be influenced by public opinion or the problems confronting the professional, who dares not stray too far from accepted style or material.

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLYMETHOD OF FISHING

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

While this chapter is intended to be a discussion of the western nymph-body wet fly and the advantages of hackling such flies with woven-hair hackles, it might be interesting to the reader to associate the purpose of the dressing with the method of fishing the completed fly.

It is my belief that the wet fly is best fished on large streams with a long cast from the open to the brushy side of the river and drifted downstream without imparting any movement to the fly. This "dead drift" can be most easily accomplished by employing a floating line, preferably of a light color, as the path of the fly can then be observed. Inasmuch as the line floats the fly should be heavy enough to hold well down in fast water, and it should be hackled with a stiff, sparse, woven-hair or fibre that will extend in such a manner as to create the appearance of a living insect and at the same time reveal every detail of the nymph-suggesting body. I am one of those who believe that a wet-fly body is an extremely important element and that it would be folly to cover it with a soft, bushy hackle.

Large fish will often be attracted by the fly from undercut banks and they will usually take it in a slow, leisurely manner while it is in the "dead drift" phase, this being especially true of large Loch Leven or Brown Trout. The taking of the fly is often done in a very deliberate manner so that any unusual stoppage or slowing of the line should prompt the angler to set the hook even though he is not convinced that a fish has caused the interruption in the progress of the line. On occasion, however, they will follow the fly for a closer inspection and will take it at some point on the retrieve so vigilance should be exercised as the line is being coiled in preparation for the next cast.

NYMPH BODIES FOR WET FLIES

Harking back to my remark about the importance of the body in wet flies, and without even slightly deprecating the role of the woven hackle, let me say that I believe that one complements the other. The primary nymphs of large western rivers are stout-bodied, principally those of the stonefly, and I am a firm believer in wet-fly bodies that are thick, hard rather than soft, --preferably with well-defined segments, and with enough built-in weight to maintain a sub-surface posture throughout the entire drift. I also like a wet-fly body that has a dark back and light belly, not only because

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLY

NYMPH BODIES FOR WET FLIES
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

this is natural, but because it provides contrast and creates an illusion of life as it drifts through the water, presenting first one side and then the other.

I would like to discuss briefly three nymph-type wet-fly bodies that meet the above requirements, each being somewhat similar in certain respects, different in others, but all definitely leaning toward the fulfillment of the same purpose. They all reflect the enterprising and unorthodox approach to fly-tying that has evolved to meet the rugged conditions that are encountered throughout the West.

The "MITE" body is the most widely known, the most successful, and has no serious competitor for the affections of the western angler. It is usually composed of hair with a narrow, contrasting-color thread stripe woven laterally on the underside. The primary purpose of this stripe is to strengthen the hair body and prevent the hair from unraveling drastically when bitten through by fish. It serves the secondary purpose of adding color, usually orange, and carries out the concept that most nymphs have lighter bellies than backs. Like the woven-hair hackle, the "Mite" body was the invention of Franz Pott of Missoula, Montana.

The "MOSSBACK" body is the product of the creative mind and skillful hands of Dan Bailey of Livingston, Montana. This nymph-body style was first braided with strands of horsehair, but fine monofilament is now used by most professionals, although many other strand materials can be effectively utilized. This body is constructed so that it has a dark back and light underside, and the underbody (foundation), usually made of orange or yellow toy balloon rubber, is allowed to show through on the belly side for additional fidelity to nature. The braiding process employed produces a flat, segmented body that is startlingly realistic, and, like all braided or woven patterns provides a body that deteriorates on the installment plan,--a little at a time.

The "CREEPER" body was created about 1931 by the writer, influenced by the writings of Hewitt and Paul Young. It is made with an inner-body shaped and weighted by the use of common pins which is then covered with heavy oval nylon. The best known version is black with a broad orange floss stripe inter-laced on the underside. This stripe has no useful purpose other than contrast but the nylon body material is so durable as to need no additional

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLYNYMPH BODIES FOR WET FLIES
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

strengthening. The method of construction results in a semi-flat body with dark back and light belly that embodies sufficient weight to hold well down in fast water and to drift with the natural pace of the current. By using various kinds of clear oval over painted inner-bodies very attractive and natural bodies can be achieved, featuring colors and designs that can not come off and which are activated to a sparkling, deep translucence when wet. The wide oval nylon produces a most natural-looking segmented appearance.

The process of forming these three types of nymph bodies is discussed in detail on the following pages, accompanied by line drawings that may prove helpful. The writer taught himself to tie these bodies and the methods described are the ones I use and not necessarily the way some other tyer would accomplish the same result.

MAKING THE "MITE" BODY

STEP 1 - Form a small, tapered thread knob at the bend of the hook (Fig. 1), which will serve as a "stop" to prevent the first turn of the body material from slipping down the bend. The sketch is greatly enlarged, --a few back and forth turns of the tying thread will suffice. In addition to the primary purpose this thread knob will provide a neatly tapered tip that adds to the appearance of the finished fly. When the fly is completed this thread knob should be as carefully lacquered as the head.

STEP 2 - Take three strands of Size "A" (.006) thread about 12" long and knot them together at one end. Cut other ends even and tie in these loose ends snug against the thread knob on side of hook nearest you. Fasten in securely all the way along hook shank to a point about 1/4" from eye of hook (Fig. 1).

STEP 3 - Prepare a group of nylon hair 4" to 6" long and about the thickness of a match. It is assumed that we are tying a large fly as they are easier. Return tying thread about 1/8" toward bend of hook and tie in nylon with long end extending to rear. Taper the end of hair at tie-in point (Fig. 2) as this will eliminate any abrupt "drop-off" when the nylon is wound back up the hook shank that would affect the even contour of the body and make the tie-off more difficult. Now, continue to securely bind the nylon along the shank to near the thread knob and back to shoulder. Repeat this

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLY

MAKING THE "MITE" BODY
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

procedure as you are dealing with an unusually coarse material which forms a core or base and must be extremely firm.

STEP 4 - If you are using a bobbin remove it as it will be in the way while forming the body. Keep it handy.

STEP 5 - Remove the hook from the vise and replace it in an upside down position. I understand that some people are able to weave these bodies without doing this, but I prefer to watch the stripe as it progresses along the body so that I can keep it perfectly straight. The top portion of the fly offers no problem as it will take care of itself if the belly weave is right.

STEP 6 - The three thread strands are now on the offside of the hook, which is the correct starting position to place them in alignment with the rest of the belly weave as it forms, but in order to have them in a more convenient working position later, bring them through the bend of the hook and put them in the rear thread clip.

STEP 7 - Take the nylon hair in your left hand and raise it to a vertical position half way around the hook shank on your side. Remove the thread strands from the thread clip with the right hand, and pass them over the nylon and the far side of the hook shank. At this point the thread is snugged firmly against the nylon to prevent it from creeping forward toward eye and at the same time pulled downward with considerable force. Maintaining this tension, bring the thread under the hook toward you, thence up and over the hook shank away from you and behind the nylon body material where it will be temporarily grasped by the three unemployed fingers of the left hand. You will now have formed the lower half of a figure eight with the weaving thread, and the work will appear as in Fig.3, except that the figure eight will actually be closed more tightly.

STEP 8 - The nylon body material is now transferred to the right hand and the weaving thread grasped with the left. Bring the nylon down below the hook on the far side, completing one full turn, and at the same time pull the weaving thread toward you, which will further tighten the weave, position the first segment of the stripe, and complete the first figure eight. The weaving thread can not unwind now as it is firmly caught under the nylon and you can now replace it in the thread clip where it was when you started.

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLY

MAKING THE "MITE" BODY
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

Fig.4 shows the nylon being brought down on the offside of the hook with the weaving thread caught in the loop thus formed, but before the encirclement is complete.

STEP 9 - It is now evident that the formation of the balance of the body merely requires a repetition of first weave. You will note, however, from Fig. 5 that the weaving thread will pass over two groups of nylon in forming the second segment of the stripe and this will be the case with each subsequent segment. As thread is pulled toward you at the completion of each figure eight use this maneuver to keep each individual portion of the belly weave in center of the body and in exact alignment with previous one. The nylon body material may have a tendency to spread excessively on the second and third turns and may have to be countered by twisting the group into a more cylindrical form. This should not be done with other turns as it tends to destroy symmetry of the body.

STEP 10 - Proceed to a point approximately $1/4$ " from eye of hook. After final figure eight has been completed place weaving thread in thread clip. Holding body material under tension, re-attach your bobbin needle. You are tying off a bulky, hard-fibred body material so do it firmly. Take 5 or 6 turns of tying thread forward, bring weaving thread from thread clip, align it with rest of belly weave, and fasten it off by winding tying thread back to body shoulder. Cut off excess weaving thread. Remove hook from vise and replace in normal position. Cut off excess body material on a slant. Try to form a smooth taper here so that the woven hair hackle can be applied firmly and neatly, as described previously.

MAKING THE "MOSSBACK" BODY

STEP 1 - Form thread knob as in "Mite" body instructions.

STEP 2 - Knot three strands of Size "C" (.008) nylon thread 12" in length together at one end. Knot three strands of nylon floss same length in a similar fashion. Use black thread and orange floss. Tie the orange floss on the near side of the hook snug against the thread knob and bind in firmly to a point $1/4$ " from eye of Size 6, 2X LS hook. Tie in black thread at this point and bind in back to thread knob on far side of hook. Allow bobbin to remain at this point. Fig. 1 shows floss and thread tied in.

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLYMAKING THE "MOSSBACK" BODY
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 3 - A firm, tapered orange wool foundation is now formed. The wool is tied in by itself just as you would start your tying thread. Start at shoulder and work directly off spool or card as tying thread is at other end and will not interfere. Finish taper at a point about 1/8" from thread knob. The tying thread is now brought forward, binding the wool all the way to the shoulder. The wool is cut off closely where it was first caught by the thread. Saturate the wool body with several drops of fly head cement. The tying thread is wound firmly back to the point where the wool was severed, smoothing over any roughness that may have occurred there, and then returned to the shoulder.

STEP 4 - If using bobbin, remove it after fastening off, as it will be in the way while braiding the body.

STEP 5 - At this point (Fig.2) we are ready to commence the braiding process, which is easy to do, but hard to describe. Unlike the "Mite" body, it is better to make this body with the hook in normal position as the dark back must be formed without allowing any of the orange underbody to show through, while the belly material being the same color as the wool foundation could have open spaces and still be presentable. This is usually not a problem with floss, however, as it overlaps very well.

STEP 6 - The first movement is to take the black thread with the left hand from the offside of the hook straight across the back toward you and snug against the thread knob. The orange floss is taken with the right hand underneath the black thread, thence over it, and then again under it. There will be an exchange of hands and materials while this is being done, ending up with the left hand holding the black thread, the right hand holding the orange floss. Fig. 3 shows the course of the floss around the thread.

STEP 7 - This is not actually a step in the process of forming the body, but rather a step in the more difficult process of explaining the method. A study of Fig. 4 will show what is actually going to take place when the dark thread is taken on the return trip over the back and the orange floss taken under. It will be observed that when the thread is taken over the back it will first pass over the floss, forming a loop, and likewise, when the floss is taken under it will form a loop around the thread. You will have thus formed two separate loops, pulling against each other in opposite directions, and coming together tightly along the median line of the wool core,

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLY

MAKING THE "MOSSBACK" BODY
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

where they will remain in the form of a slightly triangular bulge showing about an equal amount of each color of braiding material. At first some difficulty will be experienced in having these knobs maintain their position uniformly along the side but waxing the thread will provide considerable aid to the beginner.

STEP 8 - This is the step that will actually follow Step 6. After the thread has been brought toward you and the floss twisted around it as in Fig. 3 it will then be returned over the top away from you snug against the previous crossing, and the floss being held in the right hand will be pulled tight in the opposite direction, which will bring both materials against the wool foundation as in Fig. 5. This will partially complete the first triangular prominence, which will be fully completed when the floss is taken under the body and looped around the thread on the opposite side as in Fig. 6.

STEP 9 - It is now evident that the eventual completion of the body is merely dependent upon the successive repetition of the above steps. A point to remember is that the dark thread always remains on top and the light floss always remains on the bottom. Also, the dark thread is always worked across the top (back and forth) in as nearly a straight line as possible. Inasmuch as the floss must be brought across the underside to meet the thread you can not observe or control its direction exactly, but if the top is accurately formed the belly will be equally regular and will present an attractive criss-cross appearance.

STEP 10 - Tying off at the shoulder may cause you to long for an extra hand, but if you will wrap either the thread or the floss around the hook shank, the other material will be caught and unable to unwind. Place the loose material in the rear thread clip, re-attach bobbin, fasten off the material already wound around the shank, bring the other material forward and around the hook in the opposite direction, cut off loose ends and bind down thoroughly, making an even tapered base for hackle application.

MAKING THE "CREEPER" BODY

STEP 1 - Form thread knob as in "Mite" body instructions.

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLY

MAKING THE "CREEPER" BODY
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 2 - Instead of tying in the body material at the bend of the hook the tying thread is spiraled back to the starting point $1/4$ " from eye of hook. Use same hook as for "Mossback". The thread is taken back to the shoulder because the oval nylon body material is extremely coarse and it is necessary to tie it in here on the off-side in order that it may be bound securely along the hook shank clear to the thread knob at the bend. The tying thread is allowed to remain at the bend of the hook while the next step is performed. Because of the large amount of thread used in the construction of this body it is required that a bobbin needle be employed.

STEP 3 - Form wool foundation as in "Mossback" instructions.

STEP 4 - Fig. 2 shows top view of wool base with $1/2$ " common brass pin tied in on off side. The placement of this pin is quite important. Attention should be mainly directed to the location of the point, which should be beyond the wool but not flush against the thread knob. If everything else has been done correctly the head of the pin will be even with the extreme end of the shoulder. The other factor to be considered is the lateral placement, which should be approximately level with the hook shank. The pin is secured in place by wrapping tightly with tying thread in open turns from the head to and over the point of the pin and back to the head.

STEP 5 - Fig. 3 is a bottom view showing a pin tied in on each side, although both pins are attached while the hook is in an upright position. There is no difficulty in affixing the second pin, but attention should be paid to lining up the pin heads exactly opposite each other as this is necessary for an effective tie off of the final turn of the body material. Also, if the pin heads are lined up square across the points will automatically line up as the pins are of equal length. This pin is bound down with spiral turns to and over the points of both pins, but when thread is wrapped back to the shoulder it will be done by placing each turn of thread as close to the last one as is possible. At this point you will have a smooth, semi-flat base with sharp, well-defined edges.

STEP 6 - Remove hook from vise and replace it in an upside down position so that you will be in a better position to control the width and straightness of the stripe which will be formed as the nylon body material is wound. With a few turns of thread tie in three strands orange floss 6" long on the hook shank neck, cut off excess floss, whip finish thread, and remove bobbin. See Fig. 3.

THE WESTERN NYMPH-BODY WET FLY

MAKING THE "CREEPER" BODY
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 7 - Take three tight turns of oval nylon around the hook at rear, making certain that the first turn is flush against the thread knob. Holding the oval nylon below the hook with your right hand bring the orange floss tied in at the shoulder back flat along the belly of the body and bind it down tightly with the fourth turn of the oval nylon. (Fig. 4).

STEP 8 - Now, bring the floss forward over the fourth turn of oval nylon, pulling it tight and allowing it to flatten into a fairly broad stripe. (Fig. 5).

STEP 9 - Continuing to hold the floss forward wind the fifth turn of oval nylon over it, which will complete the first segment of the belly stripe. (Fig. 6).

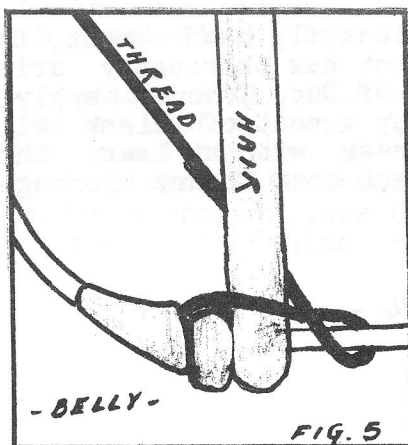
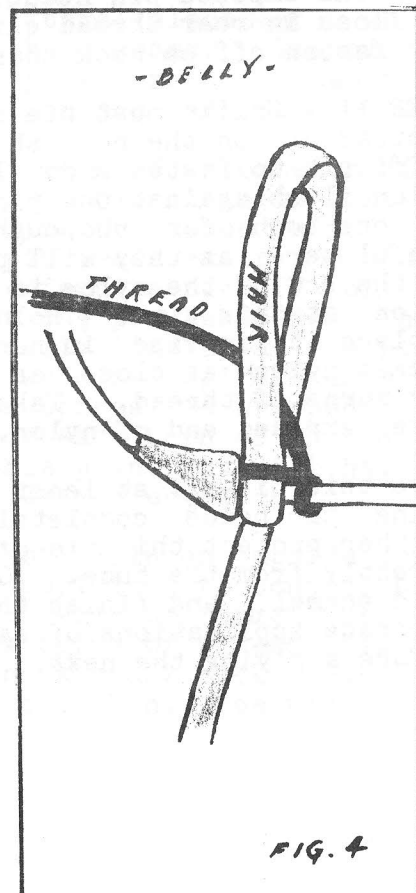
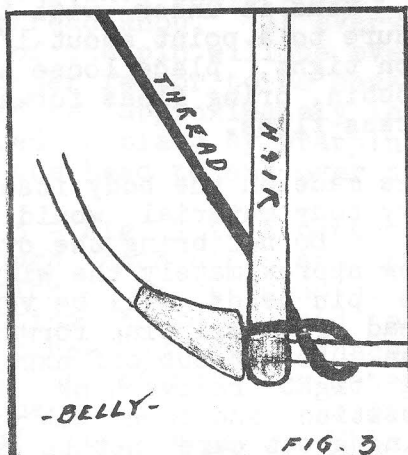
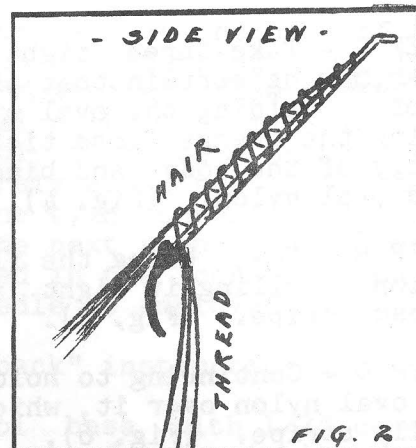
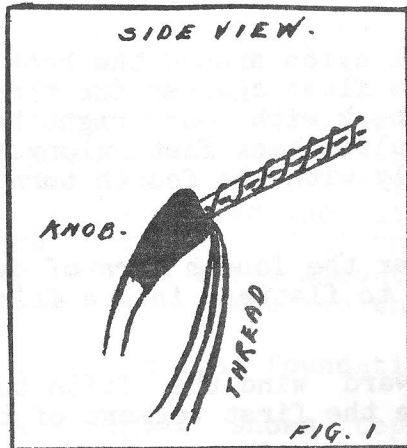
STEP 10 - Hold the floss back toward the bend, take a turn of nylon around the body, bring the floss forward, bind it under with the next turn of nylon, and repeat this procedure to a point about 1/8" from the exposed pin heads. Holding nylon tight, place loose end of floss in rear thread clip, re-attach bobbin, bring floss forward and fasten off on hook shank. Cut off excess floss.

STEP 11 - Unlike most tie-offs, this one is made on the body itself instead of on the hook shank as the heavy body material would be difficult to fasten smoothly at this point. Do not bring the oval nylon flush against the pin heads but allow approximately the width of one turn for thorough binding. The pin heads will be very useful here as they will prevent the thread from slipping forward as the end of the nylon is being bound down. Do not cut off excess nylon at this time. Holding everything tight, remove hook and replace it in vise in normal upright position and then cut off excess nylon as close as possible, taking great care not to cut any turns of thread. Take several more tight turns of thread to cover exposed end of nylon.

Give this tie-off at least two coats of black fly head cement, covering pin heads completely. After cement has thoroughly dried, further protect this tie-off with a drop of Duco Cement, applying directly from the tube. Give back of body a coat of black celluloid enamel, and finish thread knob at rear with at least three separate applications of same, allowing each coat to dry thoroughly before applying the next.

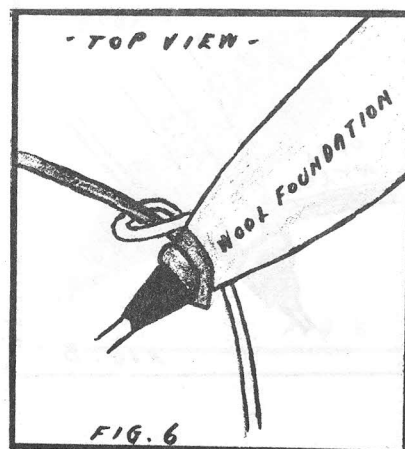
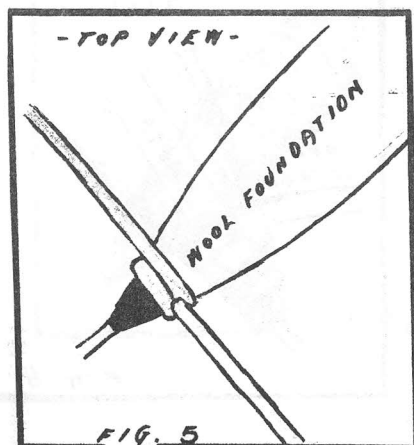
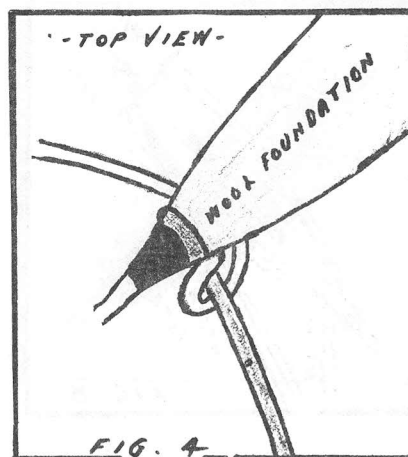
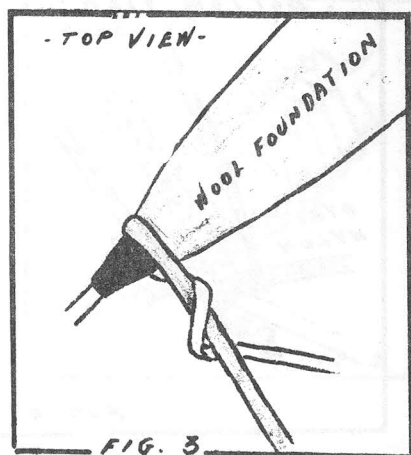
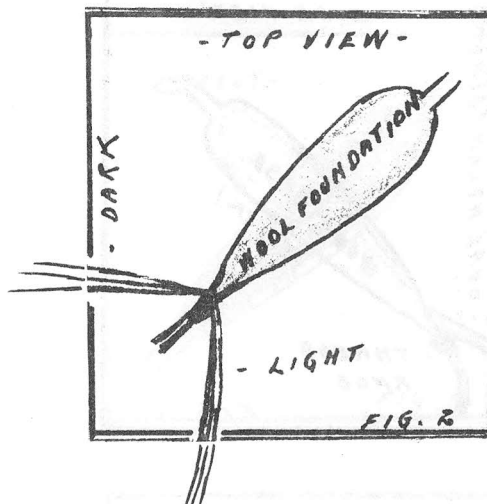
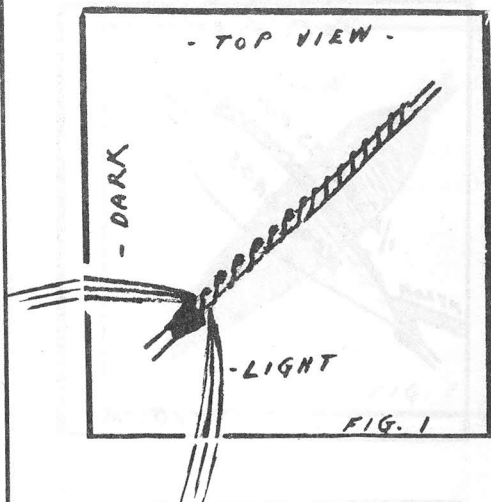
MAKING THE MITE BODY

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)



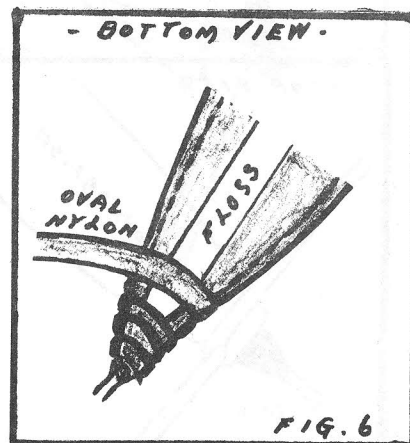
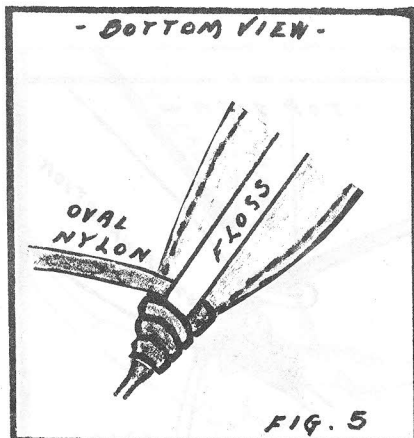
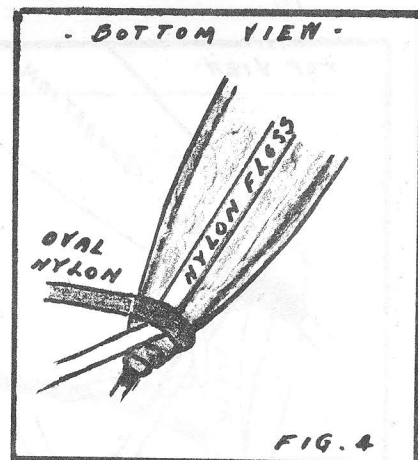
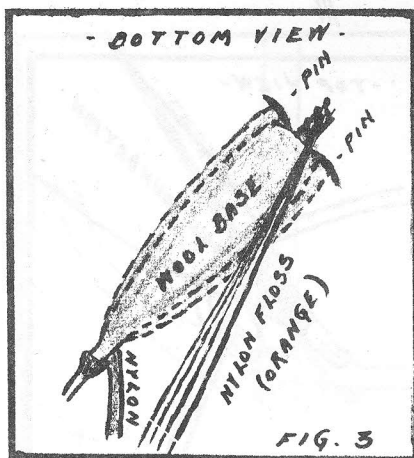
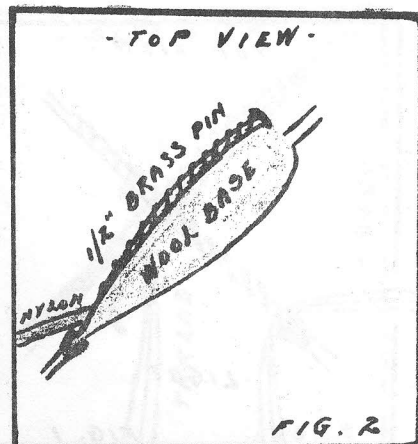
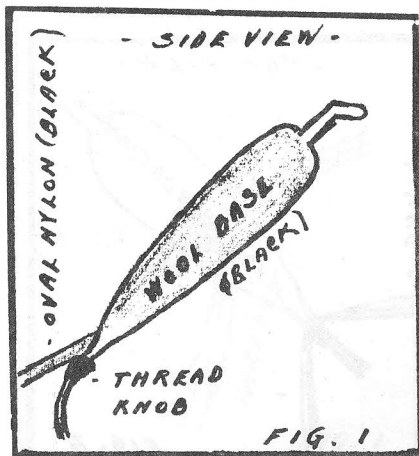
MAKING THE MOSSBACK BODY

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)



MAKING THE CREEPER BODY

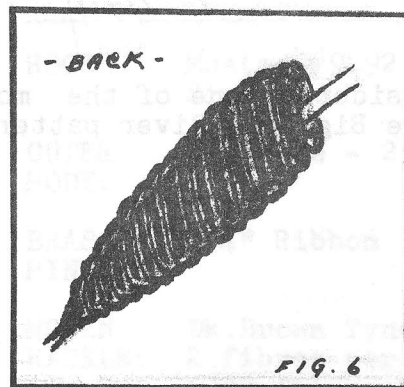
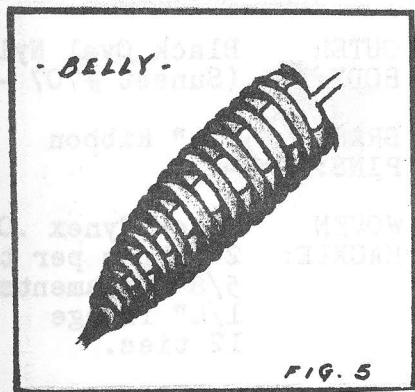
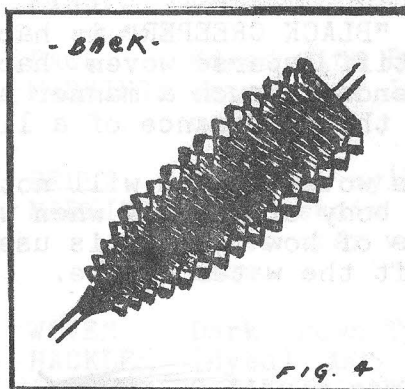
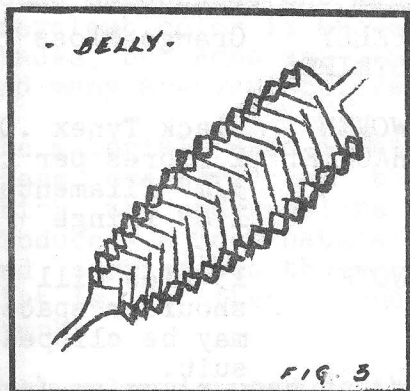
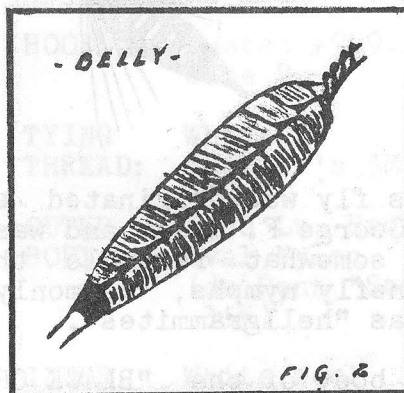
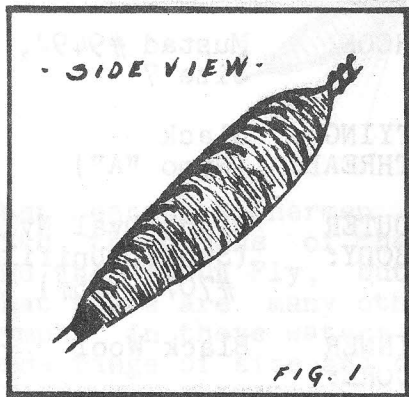
THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)



Originator of:

COMPLETED BODIES

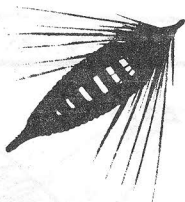
THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)



- MITE -

- MOSSBACK -

- CREEPER -

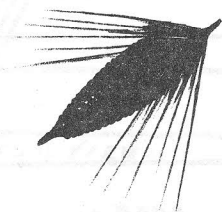
GRANT'S "BLACK CREEPER"

This fly was originated about 1931 by George F. Grant and was intended to somewhat resemble the large stonefly nymphs, commonly referred to as "hellgrammites".

The body of the "BLACK CREEPER" is thick, semi-flat, has well-defined segments, and enough built-in weight to hold well down in fast water.

The "BLACK CREEPER" is hackled with a stiff, sparse woven hackle that extends in such a manner as to create the appearance of a live insect.

This woven hackle will not cling to the body of the fly when wet regardless of how long it is used or how swift the water may be.



Considered one of the most effective Big Hole River patterns.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9492,
Size 7

TYING Black
THREAD: (Nymo "A")

OUTER Black Oval Nylon
BODY: (Sunset Unifilament
#707 - 25#)

INNER Black Wool
CORE:

BRASS 1/2" DRESSMAKER
PINS:

BELLY Orange Floss
STRIPE:

WOVEN Black Tynex .005
HACKLE: 2 fibres per tie
3/4" filaments
1/4" fringe

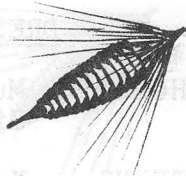
NOTE: 15 ties will fill
shoulder space and
may be clipped to
suit.

HOOK: Mustad #9492,
Size 10

OUTER Black Oval Nylon
BODY: (Sunset #707 - 20#)

BRASS 1/4" Ribbon
PINS:

WOVEN Black Tynex .005
HACKLE: 2 fibres per tie
5/8" filaments
1/4" fringe
12 ties.

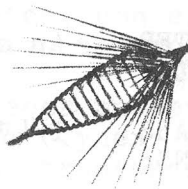
GRANT'S "STONEFLY CREEPER"

Most western fishermen are familiar with the nymphs of the Salmon Fly and the Trout Fly, but few realize that there are many other stonefly nymphs in these waters covering a wide range of size and color.

P.W.Claassen's "PLECOPTERA NYMPHS OF NORTH AMERICA" lists over 90 species found throughout the West. The most prevalent color is brown of various shades, but some are black or yellow, and many are vari-colored.

The material used in the bodies of these creepers and the manner in which the under-colors are blended produces a most natural appearance and carries out the two-tone effect that is so often found in stonefly nymphs.

Oval nylon is used as the outer body covering as it has no close rival for suggesting the smooth, segmented body of the stonefly nymph.



THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9492,
Size 7.

TYING
THREAD: White
(Herter's 5M)

OUTER
BODY: Dyed Lt. Brown
Oval Nylon
(du Pont "Stren"
35#)

INNER
CORE: White Wool

BRASS
PINS: 1/2" Dressmaker

BACK
MARKING: Edged with Black
Waterproof Ink
as shown

BELLY
MARKING: Tan oval nylon
will retain its
color over white
base.

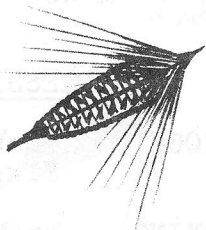
WOVEN
HACKLE: Dark Brown Tynex
(dyed) .005
2 fibres per tie
3/4" filaments
1/4" fringe
15 ties

HOOK: Mustad #9492
Size 10.

OUTER
BODY: As above - 25#

BRASS
PINS: 1/4" Ribbon

WOVEN
HACKLE: Dk. Brown Tynex .005
2 fibres per tie
5/8" filaments
1/4" fringe
12 ties.

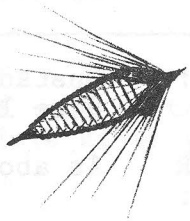
GRANT'S "MOTTLED CREEPER"

While all creepers are intended to somewhat resemble the nymph of the stonefly it is not to be felt that they will not take fish where such nymphs do not exist.

The "MOTTLED CREEPER" is probably taken in many waters for the nymph of the Dragon Fly, which has a fat body and a varied-color back. Also there are a number of western stonefly nymphs that have this mottled coloration.

The outer covering of these patterns is formed with a semi-transparent material, and the mottled effect, which is somewhat indistinct when dry, becomes extremely well-defined when wet.

The sparse woven "Tynex" hackle produces a natural appearance that years of practical experience has proven to be exceedingly deceptive to western trout.



THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9492,
Size 7.

TYING Yellow
THREAD: (Nymo "A")

OUTER Clear Oval Nylon
BODY: (U. S. Line Co.
"Mahogany King"
27#)

INNER Yellow Wool
CORE:

BRASS 1/2" Dressmaker
PINS:

BACK Mottled with Black
MARKING: Waterproof Ink as
shown.

BELLY None - Yellow Base
MARKING: will show through

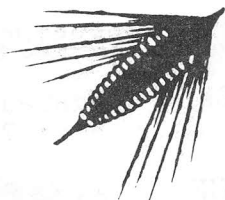
WOVEN Black Tynex .005
HACKLE: 2 fibres per tie
3/4" filaments
1/4" fringe
15 ties

HOOK: Mustad #9492,
Size 10

OUTER As above - 20#
BODY:

BRASS 1/4" Ribbon
PINS:

WOVEN Black Tynex .005
HACKLE: 2 fibres per tie
5/8" filaments
1/4" fringe
12 ties.

GRANT'S "TRANSLUCENT CREEPER"

Stonefly nymphs do not give the impression of being translucent to a marked degree, but many of the naturals have dark backs and lighter undersides, and this combination is accentuated by a semi-transparent body material.

It is the opinion of the writer (not always shared by others) that stonefly nymphs are often dislodged from their habitat, and are carried downstream in a helter-skelter fashion, presenting first one side and then the other to the feeding trout.

The "TRANSLUCENT CREEPER" is formed with a final covering material of clear plastic, which allows the permanent body colors to show through. This creates a deep translucency, which is further emphasized when the body becomes thoroughly soaked.

If the body is held to a strong light it will be observed that the edges, not being obstructed by any opaque material, seem to form a "halo" about the body, which, conceivably, could prove attractive to trout.

As in all creeper patterns, hackles are woven from "Tynex" nylon, which is also a semi-transparent material, thus adding to the translucency.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9492,
Size 7.

TYING
THREAD: Yellow
(Herter's 5M)

OUTER
BODY: Clear Oval Nylon
(U. S. Line Co.
"Mahogany King"
35#

INNER
CORE: Yellow Wool

BRASS
PINS: 1/2" Dressmaker

BACK
MARKING: Green Waterproof
Ink - Cover entire
back to edges.

BELLY
MARKING: None - Yellow base
will show through
clear nylon.

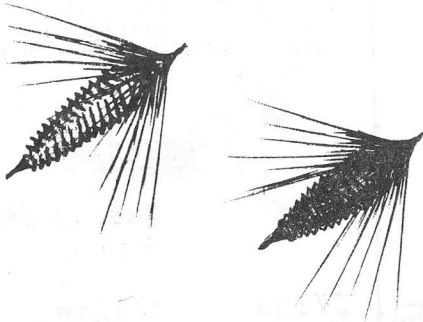
WOVEN
HACKLE: Green Tynex .005
Spot with black ink
2 fibres per tie
3/4" filaments
1/4" fringe
15 ties.

HOOK: Mustad #9492

OUTER
BODY: As above - 27#

BRASS
PINS: 1/4" Ribbon

WOVEN
HACKLE: Green Tynex as above
5/8" filaments
1/4" fringe
12 ties.

GRANT'S "BRAIDED CREEPER"

The BRAIDED CREEPER is a variation of the "mossback" method of forming stonefly nymph bodies. It produces a flat, segmented, realistic body that is highly successful and very durable.

The method was originated by Dan Bailey many years ago, and was first braided with strands of horsehair, but now fine monofilament is used by most professionals.

The pattern shown is braided with heavy thread on top and nylon floss on the bottom. Such materials are more readily available to amateur tyers, and the use of them does not reduce the effectiveness of the nymph.

This style of body is particularly effective when combined with a very sparse woven-hair or woven-fibre hackle that does not obscure the lifelike body when fished in fast water.

An equally effective variation of the pattern described at right is one with a black back and burnt orange underside. This pattern is called the ORANGE MOSSBACK and should be hackled with black Tynex.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9492,
Size 7.

TYING
THREAD: Dark Brown
(Nymo "A")

INNER
CORE: Tan Wool

BACK
THREAD: Dark Brown
3 strands 12" long
knotted together
Size "C" .008

BELLY
FLOSS: Tan
3 strands 12" long
knotted together
Herter's "Superla"

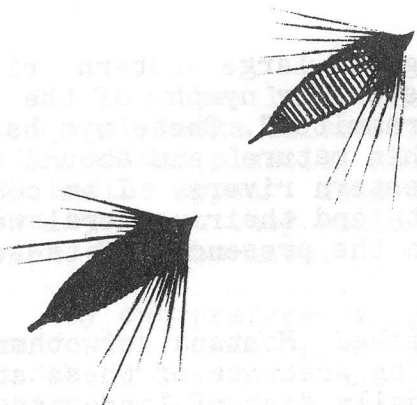
WOVEN
HACKLE: Dark Brown Tynex
(dyed) .005
2 fibres per tie
3/4" filaments
1/4" fringe
15 ties

HOOK: Mustad #9492
Size 10.

BACK
THREAD: 3 strands 10" long
knotted together
Size 3M .006

BELLY
FLOSS: 2 strands 10" long
knotted together
Herter's "Superla"

WOVEN
HACKLE: Dark Brown Tynex
(dyed) .005
2 fibres per tie
5/8" filaments
1/4" fringe
12 ties.

GRANT'S "BRASS BUG"

This pattern was designed to furnish the fly-fisherman with a nymph-body wet fly that would fish right on the bottom without the necessity of changing to a sinking line.

A floating line provides the angler with a visible, sensitive link between rod and fly that is partially lost when using a sinking line.

The great advantage of this pattern is that you can change from a sub-surface wet fly to a bottom-probing nymph in a matter of seconds merely by changing the fly instead of the line.

The use of the extremely-heavy fly gives the fly-fisherman an interesting and highly productive mode of fishing when ordinary methods are ineffective.

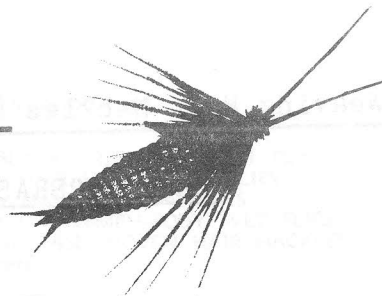
Deep water, formerly unresponsive to the fly, will give up large fish, and on those blistering hot days when all else fails the "BRASS BUG" will often save the day.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK:	Mustad #9492, Size 7.
TYING THREAD:	Yellow (Herter's 5M)
OUTER BODY:	Brass Wire (Dead soft .018)
INNER CORE:	Yellow Wool
BRASS PINS:	1/2" Dressmaker
BACK MARKING:	Black Celluloid Enamel (3 coats) Cover entire back to edges.
BELLY MARKING:	Plain Brass (Optional - May be painted any color)
WOVEN HACKLE:	Black Tynex .005 2 fibres per tie 3/4" filaments 1/4" fringe 15 ties

HOOK:	Mustad #9492 Size 10.
OUTER BODY:	Brass Wire .015
BRASS PINS:	1/4" Ribbon
WOVEN HACKLE:	Black Tynex .005 2 fibres per tie 5/8" filaments 1/4" fringe 12 ties.



THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPH

IMITATION vs. SUGGESTION

When we speak of nymph fishing on large western rivers we are principally concerned with the stonefly nymph of the Family Pteronarcys, commonly known as "hellgrammites". These nymphs attain a size of approximately two inches when mature and abound in vast profusion on the streambeds of most western rivers. I am convinced that the large size of western trout and their general well-fed appearance is directly attributable to the presence of these large nymphs.

Every fly-tyer who has ever fished Montana or other large western rivers soon becomes aware of the presence of these stonefly nymphs and their importance in the daily diet of large trout, and there has always been an interesting diversity of thought among creative fly-tyers as to whether the natural nymph should be copied by approximate imitation or casual suggestion.

The problem of how to best recreate these nymphs is a formidable one because of their large size as large imitations are more readily revealed as to their fraudulent nature than are smaller ones. Fortunately, these nymphs exist in a variety of sizes and it is not necessary that the extreme size of the fully-grown nymph be duplicated.

CAL BIRD, the extremely capable San Francisco fly-tyer, has chosen to use a rough fur body and humpback wing pads, although neither are typical of the natural stonefly nymph which has a smooth, segmented body, and its wing cases are most often prominent and sharp-pointed. In some species, however, there are thoracic gill tufts that could best be suggested by a rough imitation.

DAN BAILEY, the Montana expert, has a series of large nymphs called "Mossbacks", which is a definite attempt to simulate the large stonefly nymph. The body of the "Mossback" is composed of braided or woven nylon monofilament and is hard, relatively smooth, and distinctly segmented.

The two patterns described above are radically different in both body and leg style, yet both versions are successful when presented by a competent fly-fisherman.

POLLY ROSBOROUGH, recognized as the fly-tyer who knows most about western nymphs and how to tie them, produces a large nymph known as the "Dark Stone", featuring a fuzzy body, loose wing pads,

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPHIMITATION vs. SUGGESTION
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

and soft feather legs, the idea being to create a quivering, active nymph that looks alive. This truly great tyer utterly condemns hard shell, molded plastic, and rubber-bodied nymphs on the grounds that such bodies appear dead in the water and if they should ever be taken by trout they would be ejected immediately before an effective strike could be made.

My own preference is overwhelmingly in favor of the hard body formed with oval nylon monofilament over a weighted and shaped foundation and is based on over forty years of fly-tying and fly-fishing on western Montana rivers. It is quite generally conceded that my "Black Creeper" pattern, formed on these lines, has taken more large trout from the lower Big Hole River than any other single pattern. In the last 10 years I have been experimenting with a deep nymph, the "Brass Bug", in which I have substituted brass wire in place of the oval nylon. It would be difficult to find a harder body material than solid metal and yet, if I were to be restricted to one nymph, this is the one I would choose.

On the other hand, I do not discount the effectiveness of the fur-bodied nymphs, which is attested to by their continued popularity. There are many who believe that the "Mite" hair-body flies become even more deadly when usage causes the bodies to become ragged and rough. Also, we can not be certain that what appears to be a rough body when dry does not transform itself into a water-filled cylindrical shape that appears smooth and translucent to the trout. I have experimented a great deal with rough hair nymphs (which I will describe later) and have had a reasonable amount of success with them, although, admittedly, I do not use them as much or with the same degree of confidence as the hard body nymphs.

WESTERN NYMPH FISHING

Quite often we read that the nymph is most useful early in the season when fly hatches are scarce, the water high and roily, and the trout more inclined to seek their food on or near bottom. On certain types of water I feel that this conclusion has a great deal of merit, but on large western rivers the melting snow pack keeps them at or near flood stage during May, June and a good part of July, and fly fishing is neither pleasureable or profitable while this condition exists. The only exception to this is during

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPH

WESTERN NYMPH FISHING

(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

the Salmon Fly glut in June and July, which fishing must be done by boat to be effective, and is a crude parody on the skillful and scientific approach to fly-fishing employed by the wading angler during periods of low, clear water.

The proper time to fish a nymph on western rivers can not be specified by the calendar, but I have always considered the water right when the shallow riffles afford fairly easy crossing so that the open side of each stretch of a winding stream can be reached and the casting done from there to the brushy, undercut banks on the opposite side.

I believe that nymph fishing is the most interesting, the most difficult, and the most consistently productive of sizeable trout of all the fly-fishing methods available, but to be all these things it must be performed when the water is reasonably low and clear so that the riffles and flat stretches are well defined, and it is possible to read the water as to rate of flow, approximate depth, and where it is most likely that the larger trout are located.

It is my opinion that proper depth is the key factor in nymph fishing and the angler must have some systematic approach to this problem. I have always contended that the best method of fishing the wet fly on a large western river is with a drift cast and a floating line, and if it is intended that wet flies and nymphs are to be used alternately then I would prefer a floating line with a wet tip. A floating line provides the angler with a visible, sensitive link between rod and fly that is partially lost when using a full sinking line, and there is little doubt as to which line affords the most immediate contact when the nymph is taken.

My hard-body nymphs are all constructed by using exact methods and materials, and I am able to control their weights to a fraction of a grain. An oval nylon body nymph on a Size 7 #9492 Mustad hook weighs $5\frac{1}{2}$ grains, the same nymph with nylon-coated wire body weighs $7\frac{1}{2}$ grains, and one wound with .018 dead-soft brass wire weighs $11\frac{1}{2}$ grains.

I usually start my fishing day with the wet fly because it is a natural and pleasant way to fish and is reasonably effective for me on most occasions. However, if I fail to achieve success

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPHWESTERN NYMPH FISHING

(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

I change to the nymph and do this by merely changing the style and weight of my fly and the angle of my cast. I usually make changes progressively although the important consideration is to gain the correct depth. Many times I am forced to go all the way to the bottom-probing "Brass Bug", which is somewhat difficult to cast and requires a change in technique. It is an extremely interesting and rewarding experience to spend several hours on a two hundred yard stretch of good water that is originally unresponsive to the ordinary wet fly method and have it produce several good trout to the deep nymph. I resort to a full sinking line only when fishing extremely deep runs where I feel there is an opportunity to encounter a really large fish.

THE WOVEN HACKLE HARD BODY NYMPHTHE "NYMPH CREEPER"

This nymph is merely an extension and refinement of the western nymph-body wet fly in an attempt to make it appear more natural to the trout when fished at a greater depth and slower pace, and possibly subjected to closer and more leisurely scrutiny.

I use black "Tynex" a great deal for woven nymph hackles as it has sufficient stiffness and thickness to effectively simulate the stout legs of the stonefly nymph. The hackle is woven very sparse,--not over six or eight individual fibres. The short inner fringe can be eliminated to enhance the sparse appearance. Because this "skimpy" hackle will not always adequately cover the space allowed at the shoulder of the fly I usually add an ostrich or peacock herl head for a more finished appearance. As an alternate method the hackle could be woven full length and fibres clipped out to suit after being wound on. This is my usual practice with woven hackle wet flies.

Wing cases are Jungle Cock eye feathers, which I like because they produce a natural touch reminiscent of the nymphs of the Perla genus, but a more practical reason is that I believe a deep nymph needs additional visibility and contrast to attract attention. I am aware that Jungle Cock has been taken off the import list, but I will continue to use it until my supply is exhausted, and I feel sure that others will do the same. Its value in a nymph may be more imaginary than real, but it is suggested as stonefly nymph wing

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPHTHE "NYMPH CREEPER"

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
 WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
 WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
 ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
 NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
 (Patented)

cases by both Wetzel and Leonard in their authoritative writings.

I prefer the oval nylon body as I do not believe there is any other material which closely rivals it for suggesting the smooth, segmented body of the large stonefly nymph, but, as previously stated, I do use other materials for these hard-body nymphs in the interest of adding weight. I would sooner do it in this manner than risk loose and poorly-formed bodies that usually result from winding hook shanks with lead wire. Some types of oval nylon produce deeply translucent bodies and when used clear over painted foundations many natural and attractive nymph patterns can be achieved.

TYING THE WOVEN HACKLE HARD-BODY NYMPHTHE "NYMPH CREEPER"

STEP 1 - Same as "Creeper" body in previous chapter, except use yellow tying thread (Herter's Size 5M, .005), or similar, and add two "Tynex" tails about 3/8" long and divided.

STEP 2 - Same as "Creeper" body but use clear oval nylon. If oval not available use round (.018). I tied them this way for years before oval was available.

STEP 3 - Same as "Creeper", but use yellow wool.

STEPS 4 & 5 - Same as "Creeper"

STEP 6 - Same as "Creeper" but not necessary to tie in floss. No stripe is involved in the hard-body nymph but it is still better to wind the nylon while the hook is in an upside down position.

STEP 7 - Remove bobbin from hook and give partially completed nymph a coat of clear fly head cement. Allow to dry thoroughly. Using a felt-tipped chisel-edge marking pen, filled with black waterproof ink, cover the entire top side of the body down to the edges but do not touch the yellow underside. Allow to dry. When the nylon strand is wound over this prepared base it will result in a nymph body with a dark back and yellow belly. The colors will never darken in water or come off. They will actually become more vivid and translucent when wet. Any combination of colors could be used instead of the black-yellow suggested. See Fig. 1.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPH

THE "NYMPH CREEPER"
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 7 (alternate) - If a mottled design is desired use a sharp-point black felt pen and make a pattern on the top side of the shaped base. The design will appear spotted or mottled after the nylon is wound over it. (Fig. 2).

STEP 7 (alternate) - An attractive pattern that produces a very natural-looking two-color nymph is attained by using a black sharp-pointed pen and forming a tapered stripe on each side of the top, leaving the yellow center untouched as shown in Fig. 3. This can be repeated on the bottom if desired.

STEP 7 (alternate) - A realistic striped effect can be achieved by tying in and winding simultaneously two contrasting colors of round nylon monofilament (.014), which is approximately the same size as one strand of 25-pound oval nylon. This style of body is shown in Fig. 4.

NOTE 1 - Anyone with real artistic ability could make extremely lifelike designs on the back of these nymphs with the full assurance that they would remain in their original state for the life of the nymph. They are very durable and usually end up dangling from an overhanging willow across stream or embedded in the jaw of a big Brown.

STEP 8 - Wind oval or round nylon to a point about 1/8" from the exposed pin heads and fasten off on body as specified in Step 11 of instructions for "Creeper" body.

STEP 9 - Apply Jungle Cock wing cases. Use "nail" portion of small feathers as it is not desirable to cover too much of the nymph body. Strip fluff but do not cut off quill stems as they will facilitate handling. Apply Duco Cement on the back of one feather and affix it in proper position on the back of the nymph with quill extending over eye. Do the same with other feather so that they are side-by-side and matched. Allow cement to dry thoroughly and then bind down quills on hook shank. This will prevent Jungle Cock from flaring upward for it is desired that they remain flat. Cut off excess quill.

STEP 10 - Tie in two fibres of "Tynex" nylon for antennae or "feelers". This material should have been previously sanded to a finely-tapered point. They should be three to four times longer

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPH

THE "NYMPH CREEPER"
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

than the tails. Javelina quills or guard hairs are also excellent for this purpose. Antennae should be divided as shown in accompanying illustrations.

STEP 11 - Apply woven hackle as in Step 14 of "The Western Woven Hair Hackle" in a previous chapter.

STEP 12 - Add an ostrich or peacock herl head if deemed advisable for either artistic or practical purposes, or both.

KEY TO HARD-BODY NYMPHS ON FOLLOWING PAGE

FIG. 1 - TRANSLUCENT NYMPH

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| " | 2 - MOTTLED | " |
| " | 3 - STONEFLY | " |
| " | 4 - STRIPED | " |
| " | 5 - BLACK HELGRAMITE | |
| " | 6 - TROUT FLY NYMPH | |
| " | 7 - BRASS BUG (UNDERSIDE) | |
| " | 8 - HALF STONE | |
| " | 9 - SMALL STONE | |

— Originator of:

THE "BEE CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

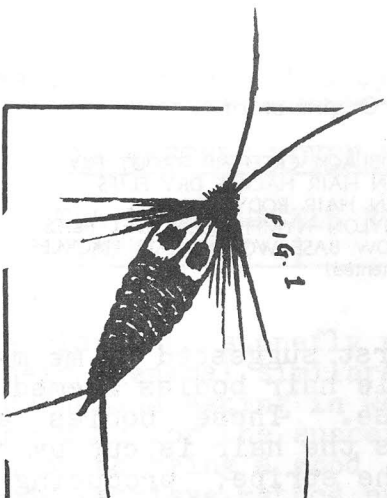


FIG. 1

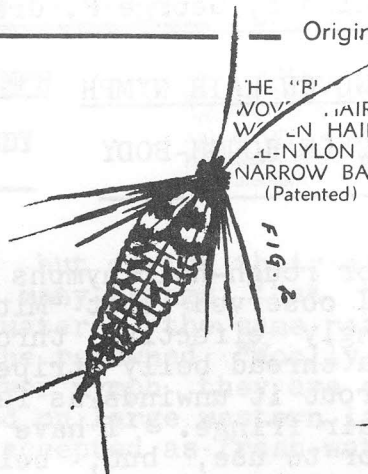


FIG. 2

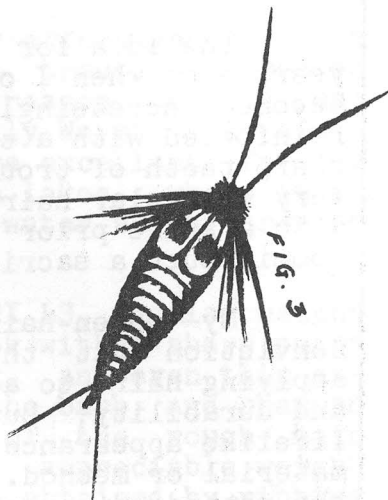


FIG. 3

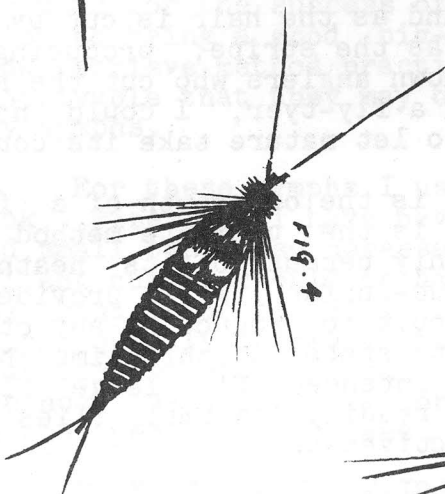


FIG. 4

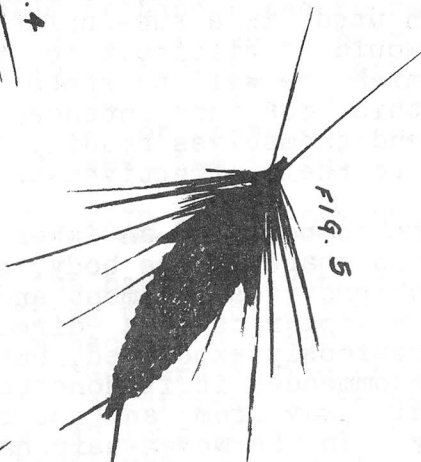


FIG. 5

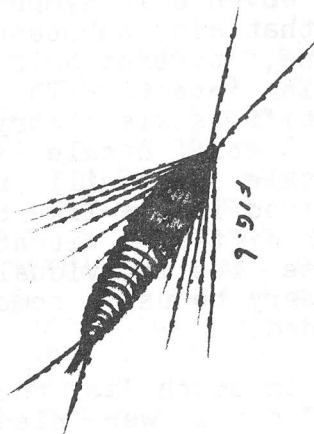


FIG. 6

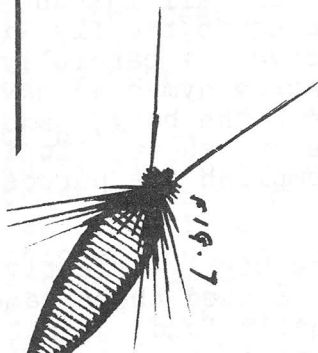


FIG. 7

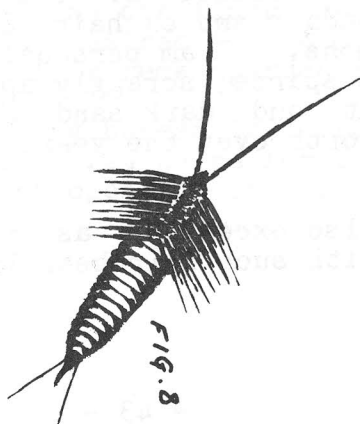


FIG. 8

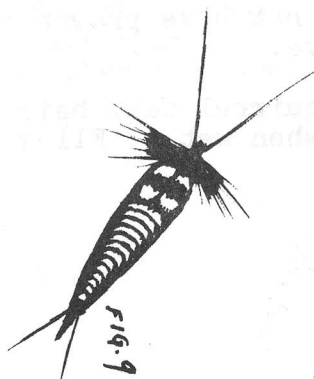


FIG. 9

- UNDERSIDE -

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THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPHTHE WOVEN HACKLE ROUGH-BODY NYMPH

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

The idea for rough-hair nymphs was first suggested to me many years ago when I observed that "Mite" style hair bodies seemed to become increasingly effective through use. These bodies are reinforced with a thread belly stripe and as the hair is cut by the sharp teeth of trout it unwinds as far as the stripe, producing a very irregular hair fringe. I have known anglers who cut the hair with a knife prior to use, but, being a fly-tyer, I could never commit such a sacrilege, and preferred to let nature take its course.

My woven-hair rough-body nymph is the outgrowth of a firm conviction that the woven hair hackle is the ultimate method of applying hair to a hook shank, not only because of its neatness and durability, but when used in a sub-surface fly it provides a lifelike appearance that would be difficult to produce by any other material or method. It might be well to state at this time that the methods discussed in this book are intended for large flies and most of them do not lend themselves readily to small flies and would not necessarily add to their effectiveness.

Woven hair nymphs are composed of an inner hackle of clipped hair that adds substance and shape to the body, and an outer hackle of fine, tapered hair that provides movement and the appearance of a living insect. This may appear to be a direct contradiction of the stiff-hackle theory previously expounded, but in all instances where a stiff hackle is recommended it is done to equip the fly with a hackle that will remain away from and not cover a carefully-contrived insect-like body. In the woven-hair hackle nymph we have a much different situation in that the hackle forms the body, and, because the individual filaments of the hackle are short, it is necessary to use a somewhat softer hackle to accomplish the purpose intended.

Inasmuch as the original bodies of the highly-effective "Mite" flies were tied with badger and ox hair I used these same hairs in weaving rough-hair nymphs. I am personally fond of natural badger hair because of its sparse, scraggly appearance in this type of nymph. However, light and dark sandy ox and black are colors that have proven their worth over the years and are equally effective.

Squirrel tail hair is also excellent as it is especially mobile when wet. Flies made with such hair bear little or no re-

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPHTHE WOVEN HACKLE ROUGH-BODY
NYMPH (cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

semblance to stonefly nymphs, but derive their effectiveness from their general similarity to many things that trout are used to seeing and eating in western waters, the same reason which I feel accounts for the success of the renowned "Woolly Worm". In addition to being a good big-river nymph they are excellent for the slow-retrieve method practiced on large western lakes, where it is conceivable that they may be accepted as fresh-water shrimp or dragon fly nymphs.

For these nymphs I usually use Mustad's 2X LS, regular weight hook, Size 7. I have never found a heavy hook with a sharp point and small barb, so necessary for nymph fishing, and even this excellent number should be hand-honed to reduce the barb and sharpen the point prior to use. The bulky hair body of the rough-hair nymph quickly becomes water-logged and gains appreciable weight over its dry state. Additional weight could be obtained by ribbing the hook shank with lead or brass wire and winding the hair hackle in the open spaces between the spirals.

TYING THE WOVEN-HAIR ROUGH-BODY NYMPH

STEP 1 - Weaving the hackle for this type of nymph is the most difficult part of tying the entire fly, not because it is any different than a wet fly hackle but solely because its lateral length is much greater. If we were to tie this nymph on a Size 7 Mustad #9492 2X LS hook (as specified in the text) the hackle would have to be approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ " long with individual hackle filaments about $1/4$ " long. Individual weaving groups would vary as to the number of hairs,-- squirrel is so fine that approximately 15 could be used while badger would require only 8 to 10 hairs. In actual sorting these are not counted but only estimated. Care should be taken to keep the tip ends even so they will all be caught in the short $1/4$ " grip of the forceps. The fringe, or inner hackle, should be trimmed slightly shorter than the finer outer portion depending on the fullness or sparseness desired in the finished nymph. It can be eliminated entirely if extreme sparseness is desired.

STEP 2 - Start tying thread $1/4$ " from eye of hook and wind to point of hook. Tie in a few hairs for tail of same hair as hackle and proceed to a point opposite tip of barb, and then form usual thread knob.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPH

TYING THE WOVEN-HAIR ROUGH-
BODY NYMPH (cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 3 - Tie in knotted end of hair hackle close to knot that is at end of hair snug against the thread knob, Fig. 1. Wind tying thread over hackle thread in close turns for $1/4$ ", cut off surplus hackle thread, and then proceed with close turns of tying thread to eye of hook.

STEP 4 - Wind hackle one full turn against knob (Fig. 2) and then spiral to eye, taking at least the last two turns tight against each other. This is just a trial run to determine if the hackle so wound is long enough to reach a point where it can be fastened off with a small, neat head. If it falls short make a mental note that spirals will have to be slightly widened on next trip. Now unwind hackle to original starting point.

STEP 5 - Apply Duco Cement from tube along top of hook shank almost to eye (Fig. 3). Do not use too much as it may get into hair and mat it. Wind hackle firmly over cement to near eye as before, making any adjustments necessary, as this time it is "for keeps". (Fig. 4 shows start of clockwise spiral winding procedure). The cement will glue the hackle to the hook shank, plus the fact that it will harden and form a firm ridge between each turn of the hair hackle, thereby preventing it from slipping on the hook shank and becoming loose.

STEP 6 - Tie off hackle thread firmly, cut off surplus, form neat, tapered head, whip finish. Lacquer with at least three coats of cement or enamel. Work will now appear as in Fig. 5.

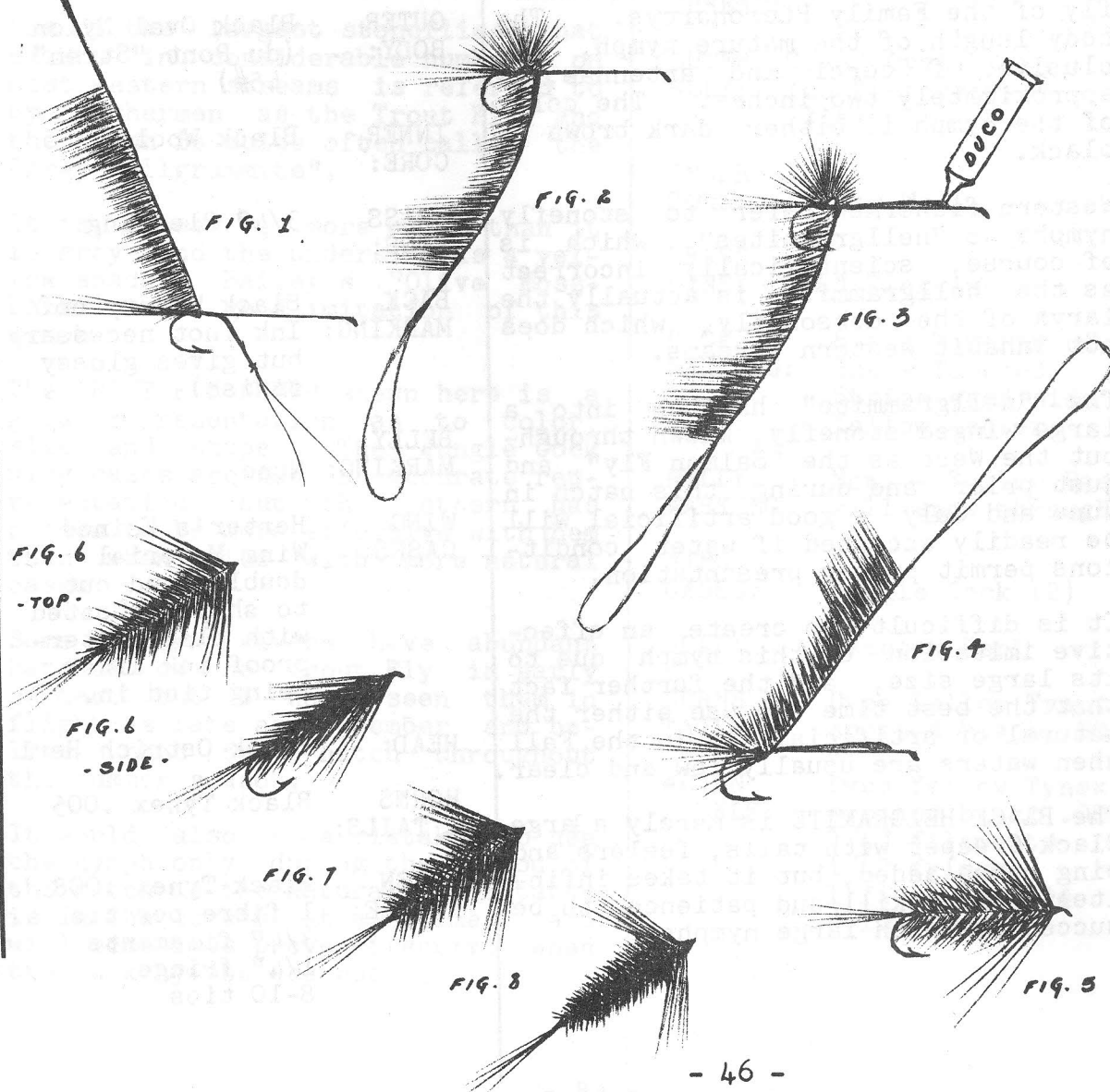
STEP 7 - Remove nymph from vise and trim flat on top and bottom, being careful not to cut any fibres extending from the sides. Finished nymph woven with badger, ox or similar coarse hair will appear somewhat as in Fig. 6.

STEP 7 - (Squirrel Tail Hair). Although woven identically the same as badger or ox hair, the difference in texture between the hairs results in completed nymphs that are quite dissimilar. Squirrel hair is fine and soft and compacts in the weaving process, producing a more bulky body when wound on the hook. When trimmed top and bottom the center portion will resemble a deer hair bug, but will be infinitely more water-absorbent. I usually weave these hackles with the rear $2/3$ of the fibres $1/4$ " long and the shoulder portion about $1/2$ " long. Finished nymph will appear approximately as in Fig. 7.

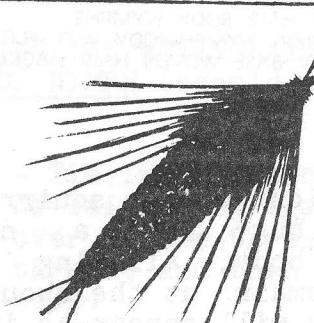
THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR NYMPHTYING THE WOVEN-HAIR ROUGH-BODY NYMPH (cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
 WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
 WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
 ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
 NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
 (Patented)

STEP 7 - (Alternate). Trim the major portion of the squirrel hair nymph (as you would a compressed deer hair bug) into a compact, well-defined, semi-flat, nymph-suggesting body, allowing a well-proportioned amount of longer fibres to remain at the shoulder of the nymph to represent legs. Finished nymph will appear as in Fig. 8.



GRANT'S "BLACK HELGRAMITE"



The most important nymph in our large western rivers is that of the stonefly of the Family Pteronarcys. The body length of the mature nymph, exclusive of cerci and antennae, is approximately two inches. The color of the nymph is either dark brown or black.

Western fishermen refer to stonefly nymphs as "hellgrammites", which is of course, scientifically incorrect as the hellgrammite is actually the larva of the dobson fly, which does not inhabit western streams.

The "hellgrammite" hatches into a large winged stonefly, known throughout the West as the "Salmon Fly", and just prior and during this hatch in June and July a good artificial will be readily accepted if water conditions permit proper presentation.

It is difficult to create an effective imitation of this nymph due to its large size, and the further fact that the best time to use either the natural or artificial is in the Fall when waters are usually low and clear.

The BLACK HELGRAMITE is merely a large Black Creeper with tails, feelers and wing cases added, but it takes infinitely more skill and patience to be successful with large nymphs.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9575, 4XLS
Size 6

TYING Black
THREAD: (Herter's 5M)

OUTER Black Oval Nylon
BODY: (du Pont "Stren"
45#)

INNER Black Wool
CORE:

BRASS 3/4" Pleating
PINS:

BACK Black Waterproof
MARKING: Ink (not necessary
but gives glossy
finish)

BELLY
MARKING: None

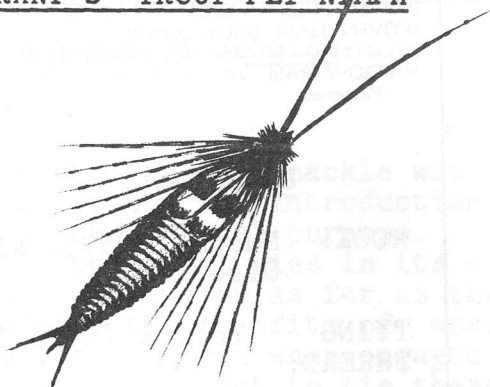
WING Herter's Veined
CASES: Wing Material
doubled and cut
to shape. Coated
with black water-
proof ink after
being tied in.

HEAD: Black Ostrich Herl

HORNS Black Tynex .005
& TAILS:

WOVEN Black Tynex .008
HACKLE: 1 fibre per tie
3/4" filaments
1/4" fringe
8-10 ties

GRANT'S "TROUT FLY NYMPH"



One of the largest stoneflies that exists in considerable numbers on most western streams is referred to by fishermen as the Trout Fly and the nymph is quite often called the "gray hellgrammite".

It is, however, more olive than it is gray and the underside is a yellow shade. Bailey's "Olive Moss-back" is a good imitation of this nymph.

The TROUT FLY NYMPH shown here is a good representation as to color, size and shape. The Jungle Cock wing cases are not an accurate representation, but the pattern has proven to be more effective with them than when tied with more natural cases.

Some western rivers have abundant hatches of the Trout Fly in early summer, but I have seen them in flight as late as September and believe that they hatch throughout the summer season.

It would also be a mistake to use the nymph only during the period of the hatch as the natural it imitates is in the stream at all times, and will sometimes prove effective when the dark nymphs are not.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9575, 4XLS
Size 6.

TYING Yellow (Nymo "A")
THREAD:

OUTER Clear Oval Nylon
BODY: (du Pont "Stren" -
35#)

INNER
CORE: Yellow Wool

BRASS
PINS: 3/4" Pleating

BACK Black Waterproof
MARKING: Ink - Tapered
Stripe each side
Yellow Center

BELLY None - Yellow Base
MARKING: will show through

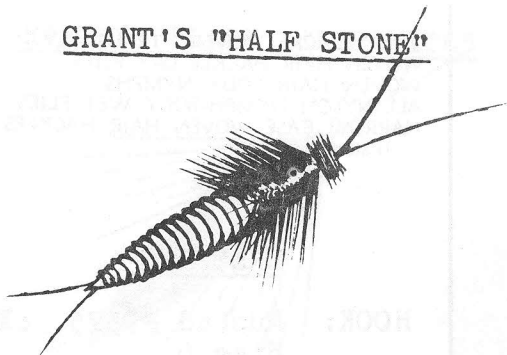
WING
CASES: Jungle Cock (2)

HEAD: Peacock Herl

HORNS & Dyed Yellow Tynex
TAILS: spotted black .005

WOVEN Dyed Yellow Tynex
HACKLE: spotted black .008
3/4" filaments
1/4" fringe
1 fibre per tie
8-10 ties.

GRANT'S "HALF STONE"



The body of the stonefly nymph is firm rather than extremely soft; smooth as opposed to rough; flat or sub-cylindrical (seldom round), and it is distinctly segmented.

In some species, not all, there is an indication of roughness on the ventral side of the thorax, which is caused by the presence of gill tufts. The stout legs of most species are fringed with fine hair.

This pattern was developed in an attempt to include both the smooth body and rough thoracic region in a single nymph. It is particularly applicable to large imitations.

The hair used in the pattern described at right is natural badger, but gray squirrel would be equally effective. In black or dark brown patterns these same hairs could be dyed, or dark sandy or black ox could be used.

The name, HALF STONE, is taken from an old English pattern that embodies the same idea on a much smaller scale. The original pattern had a rear portion of yellow floss with a shoulder of mole fur.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9575, 4XLS
Size 8.

TYING Yellow (Nymo "A")
THREAD:

OUTER Clear Oval Nylon
BODY: (du Pont "Stren" -
35#)

INNER
CORE: Yellow Wool

BRASS
PINS: 1/2" Dressmaker

BACK Black Waterproof
MARKING: Ink - Tapered
Stripe each side
Yellow Center

BELLY None - Yellow Base
MARKING: will show through

WING
CASES: None

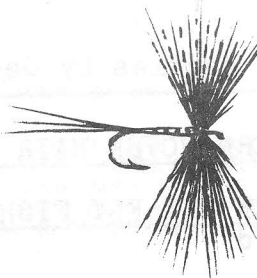
HEAD: Peacock Herl

HORNS & Dyed Yellow Tynex
TAILS: spotted black .005

WOVEN Natural badger
THORACIC guard hairs
HACKLE:
1/2" filaments
1/4" fringe
5-7 hairs per tie
1 1/2" lateral length

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR DRY FLY

GENERAL DISCUSSION



The woven hair hackle was developed primarily for use on wet flies and since its introduction it has generally been considered to have no other useful purpose. However, it is my opinion that its greatest potential lies in its use as a dry fly hackle. This is not a recent conclusion as far as the writer is concerned as I have made and enjoyed the benefits of woven-hair hackle dry flies for over thirty years. Even when engaged as a full-time professional fly-tyer I was reluctant to tie these flies for stock because the hairs necessary for their construction are relatively scarce and difficult to sort and weave, and the retail price would have been very high. I tied them to order for those who were willing to pay the price, and I gave many of them to dry-fly men whom I felt were competent to judge their merits. There were never enough to go around as the secret of their manufacture remained with me, and I tied them only when I needed new stock for my own use, or when someone pressured me to the point where there were no longer legitimate grounds for refusal.

Every western dry-fly man is aware of the Lee Wulff dry flies that embody deer hair in the wings, body and tail to improve the float. The "Irresistible" employs a clipped deer hair body to accomplish the same end, and the "Goofus Bug" is liberally supplied with deer hair in its dressing. I believe it is correct to say that these are among the best dry flies for use on fast-water western streams, and this preference is caused by a distinct need for easy floatability if the sport is to be enjoyed to the fullest extent.

I have the greatest respect for the fine qualities of these flies and for the creative and skillful people who originated and tie them, but I fully believe that a dry fly with a hackle woven from the body hair of a white-tailed deer is at once the highest-floating dry fly ever devised and the pinnacle of the art of weaving hair hackles for trout flies. Such flies have no commercial possibilities but this book is written for the advanced, inquiring amateur and there is adequate material and time available to such a tyer to enable him to produce these flies and either prove or disprove my claims. The satisfaction obtained from successfully weaving and using these deer hair dry flies is such that every effort should be made to overcome the difficulties pertinent to their manufacture.

WESTERN DRY FLY FISHING

Dry-fly fishing on the large Montana rivers, such as the

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR DRY FLY

WESTERN DRY FLY FISHING
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

Madison, Jefferson, Big Hole, et al., is practiced mainly by anglers who prefer the dry fly above all other methods and not because it is the easiest or the most productive, especially if we are concerned with the taking of large fish.

Big-river dry flies should have three primary qualities that are necessary for success, and these are given in the order of their importance:

FLOATABILITY - Flies should be heavily hackled for if they do not float well nothing else is important. Pattern is of little import as long as the fly is adequately hackled. Hackle flies are more practical than winged, but if winged flies are preferred they should be made of materials with built-in floating properties, such as deer body hair. Flies with clipped deer hair bodies are ideally suited to big-river dry fly fishing.

VISIBILITY - Flies should be of such colors that they are visible to the angler immediately upon alighting on the water. This is especially true of white-water riffles for if the eye does not discern the fly at once it will often complete its float before you can see it. Visibility is not necessarily improved by white or light colors but rather by colors that contrast with the surroundings. For example, the most visible fly for me is one made from the tail of a fox squirrel, and I would use it exclusively if it floated as well as deer hair.

DURABILITY - This feature may not be considered essential for success, as specified at the outset, but big-river trout are hard on a dry fly and I think that they should be securely fastened and made of materials able to compete with the rugged conditions expected. I usually change flies after taking a fish, but I do not retire it permanently, and I get a great deal of satisfaction from seeing how long I can use a single fly.

The flies for big-river dry fly fishing should be relatively large for if we are fishing a large river it must be assumed we are fishing for large trout. Otherwise, we would experience more pleasure and success on the many smaller streams that are available. Fishing a big river for small trout is comparable to going to Alaska to hunt small game, and, as in all other kinds of fly-fishing, big flies attract big fish. Trout are used to seeing large natural flies

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR DRY FLY

WESTERN DRY FLY FISHING
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

on the surface of these rivers. Sizeable stone and caddis flies hatch throughout the season, and the ever-present strong winds bring grasshoppers and other terrestrials from the fields. Another good reason for using large dry flies on these western rivers is to discourage Rocky Mountain Whitefish, which can be a nuisance when using the dry fly.

The upstream method of fishing the dry fly can be used on western rivers, but it is difficult and tiring. I prefer to wade with the flow of the stream and cast back upstream as I proceed. Many native "dry fly fishermen" use their dry fly as a dropper, allowing the point to fish itself. These men always work downstream, fishing the riffles only and using the pull of the fast water to keep their dry fly skipping on the surface. The method produces a lot of small trout and whitefish but is not consistently successful for heavy trout, which are most often taken on a dry fly drifted naturally with the pace of the current.

When using the wet fly and nymph I have had greatest success on the flat, deep stretches, but the dry fly has always produced the best results on the fast water riffles. I conclude from this that trout maintaining a difficult position in fast water are active feeders and a surface fly is more readily seen by them in the comparatively shallow water. The factors of floatability and visibility are greatly appreciated by the angler on this type of water, and the trout, of necessity, can not be too selective.

THE WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLY

Hackles woven for use on dry flies are made in exactly the same manner as wet fly hackles, but the similarity ends with the actual mechanics of weaving. The thread used as a base is much thinner and lighter, hair used in forming the hackle is comparatively soft, and the lateral length of a dry fly hackle is about twice the length of a wet fly hackle.

The lighter thread is used to reduce weight and create a hackle with a narrow rib so that as many convolutions of hackle may be taken about the shank of the hook as is possible in the limited space available on the average small dry fly hook. The exact number of turns would be dependent upon the fullness of hackle desired, usually not less than three nor more than five.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR DRY FLYTHE WOVEN HAIR HACKLE
DRY FLY (cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

Soft hair is necessary so that in the weaving process a sufficient number of individual weaving operations can be performed in a specified length of hackle so that a bushy hackle will result when wound on the hook. Such a hackle will not only provide excellent floating qualities, but also will encircle the hook in an even distribution of hair filaments without showing open spaces that would detract from the appearance of the finished fly.

Just as the soft hair is required for the purpose outlined above it is even more necessary for the formation of the thick, clipped-hair inner hackle, which is the heart and soul of the woven hair dry fly. This inner hackle is formed by trimming the excess butt ends of the woven hair to a length approximately one-half the length of the outer hackle.

The clipped inner hackle serves a variety of purposes, the most important being that it serves as the principal floating medium without detracting from the delicate appearance of the fine tapered hairs that form the outer hackle and rest on the surface film.

Because the inner hackle winds on the hook at a forward-angle and being stiffer than the outer hackle it influences the latter to assume relatively the same attitude. The forward-leaning position of the hackle is a stable one and will not change regardless of the amount of false casting to which it is subjected. The advantage of having a dry fly that always alights on the water with its hackle fibres extended in a forward position is too well known to require further elaboration here.

The final function of the clipped inner hackle is to absorb and retain silicone dry fly oil. It does this very well, and if these flies are soaked in silicone oil for approximately one hour and allowed to dry completely they will be waterproofed indefinitely as only the solvent evaporates. However, I would recommend a light application of paste line dressing immediately prior to use.

TYING THE WOVEN HAIR DRY FLY

In the initial chapter on weaving hair hackles the various types of hairs suitable for dry flies were discussed in detail and a review of this section would probably prove helpful at this time.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR DRY FLY

TYING THE WOVEN HAIR
DRY FLY (cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

The length of a woven dry fly hackle is predetermined by the fact that it should cover approximately the forward one-half of the hook shank to provide a sufficiently broad floating base and create a proper balance.

On a Size 10 Mustad #94840 dry fly hook the hackle would be 7/8" long, and if made of deer body hair it would contain about 30 ties composed of five hairs each. This length of hackle would provide five turns of hackle around the hook shank and create a heavily hackled dry fly. Measurements must be fairly exact as you can not shorten or lengthen the hackle once it is applied to the hook. This is not a problem but is, rather, an asset for if measurements are uniformly adhered to it will result in completed flies that are more nearly alike than is usually possible with ordinary methods. Hackle filaments on this size fly, as I prefer to tie it, are 3/8" long, but all specifications suggested can be altered to suit individual preference.

STEP 1 - As in most woven hair hackle flies the weaving of the hackle is the most difficult part of tying the fly as the actual application of the hackle to the hook is exceedingly simple. In practically all orthodox dry flies the body is formed first and the hackle attached as the final operation, but in this case the reverse is true. The first operation is to attach the tying thread to the hook shank at a point opposite the point of the hook and then wind it in close turns to a point very near the eye of the hook. This will provide a good base for the hackle. Now wind three turns of tying thread, close together, back toward the bend of the hook. This will form the head of the fly and also prepare a small knob of thread that the first turn of the hackle will rest against and eliminate any possibility of a forward slippage. (Fig. 1)

STEP 2 - The loop end of the hackle will be tied in snug against the small knob thus formed and bound to the hook shank by close turns of the tying thread back to the hook point where the hackle thread will be cut off close. When the hackle is tied in at the head of the fly allow about 1/8" between hackle knot and hook shank so that the first turn of hackle will go on correctly without having individual fibres projecting at odd angles. When the hackle is tied in (Fig. 2) the outer tapered hairs will be facing you and the short fringe will be away from you.

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR DRY FLYTYING THE WOVEN HAIR
DRY FLY (cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
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WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 3 - The first turn of the hackle (Fig. 3) should come to the lower side of the hook without any part of the actual hair hackle having been wound, and at this point the hair fringe will be facing you.

STEP 4 - Fig. 4 shows the first complete turn of the hackle taken at the head of the fly and hackle poised for the next turn. When the hackle is in this position the long fibres will always be facing you and the short fibres will be on the other side. Turns are always taken clockwise away from you, progressing toward the bend of the hook. The winding is done with the fingers as it can be done more precisely and firmly than with hackle pliers. The bottom knot will assist you in holding the thread. If absolute security is desired the hackle foundation could be given a light coat of cement before winding the hackle, but my experience has been that if the hackle is properly applied without cement it will never work loose.

STEP 5 - The hackle will now be wound in firm, close turns (each turn against the other with no spaces between), and should cover to the end but not beyond the thread foundation previously prepared. At this point the knotted end of the hackle thread will be bound down by 3 or 4 close turns of the tying thread and cut off close. It will be observed at this point that if the weaving thread of the hackle and the tying thread are the same color this tie-off will not be visible. (Fig. 5 shows hackle completely wound and just prior to cutting off surplus hackle thread).

STEP 6 - With the end of the hackle thread tied in and cut off the next move is to tie in hair for tails. I prefer the badger guard hairs for this purpose as they are straight and tough and will last as long as the fly. Polar and other bear guard hairs are also excellent. Tie in 3 to 5 hairs with the next turn of the thread and allow butt ends to project forward. If you were to cut them off close at this point it would destroy the smooth, even taper of the thread body. Bind in tails with close turns of tying thread toward bend of hook in order to make a body of proper proportions but do not go so far as to cause the tails to take a downward slant. Now return the tying thread forward toward the eye in close even turns, using the butt ends of the tails to help you form a gradual taper right up to the rear of the hackle. (Fig. 6 shows tails tied in with butt ends of hairs projecting forward).

THE WESTERN WOVEN HAIR DRY FLY

TYING THE WOVEN HAIR
DRY FLY (cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 7 - Cut off butt ends of tails close to hackle. Unwind tying thread three or four turns. Lay loop of fine monofilament or heavy tying thread along hook shank at this point (Fig. 7) and push loose end of tying thread through loop. Use loop to pull tying thread under turns of thread previously taken, and you will have fastened off with a barely discernible whip finish.

STEP 8 - Coat the thread body with at least three coats of clear celluloid or fly head cement, allowing each coat to dry thoroughly before applying the next. Place a drop of cement on the fly head. This will give your fly a thin, tapered body and this is a feat that is practically impossible to achieve in any other type of dry fly where hair is used as a wing or hackle. All of the standard bodies could be used if desired but it would be difficult to make a neat tie-off. (Fig. 8 is an enlarged sketch of the completed fly).

the Flyfisher

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The "Flyfisher" often features stories about Montana and other western trout streams.

Montana's Rock Creek

Five brands of wild
trout inhabit this
blue ribbon stream

By TOM WENDELBURG

This space is donated by the author in the interest of fly-fishing and does not constitute an endorsement of the contents of this book by the FFF.

HACKLING THE WOVEN HAIR DRY FLY

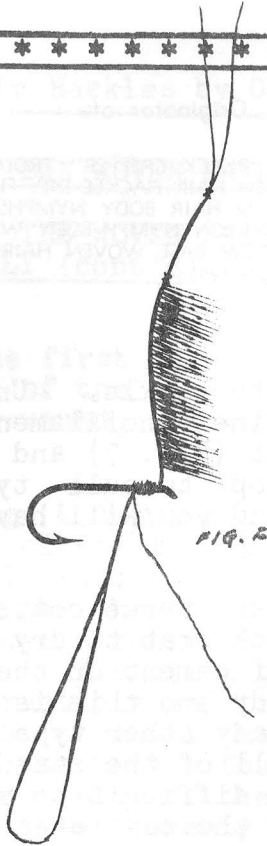


FIG. 2

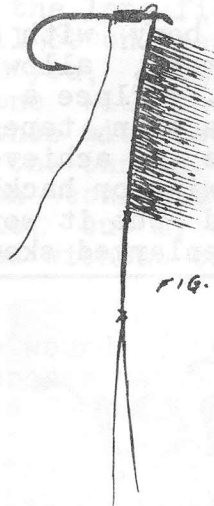


FIG. 3

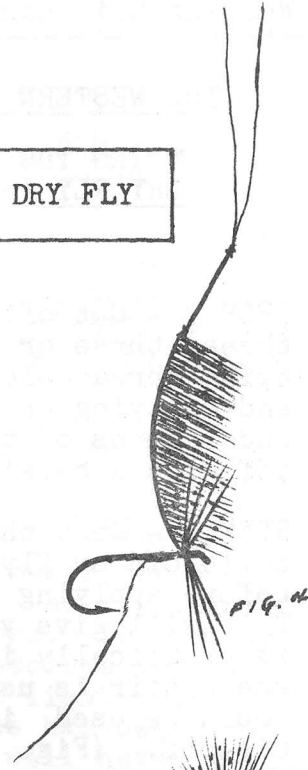


FIG. 4



FIG. 1

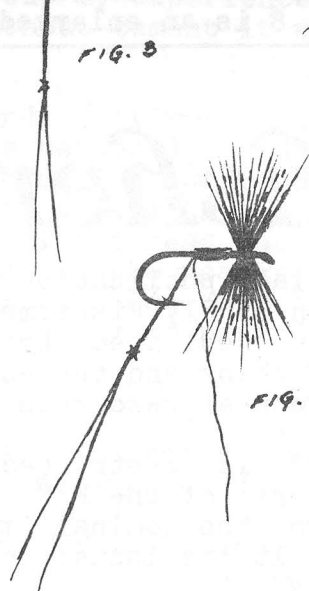


FIG. 5

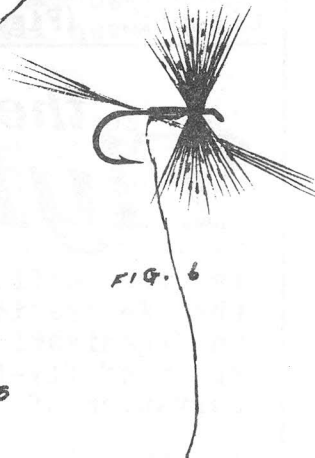


FIG. 6

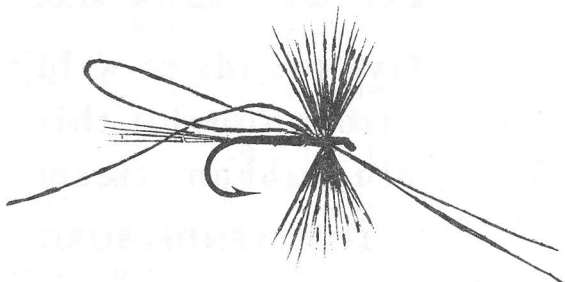


FIG. 7

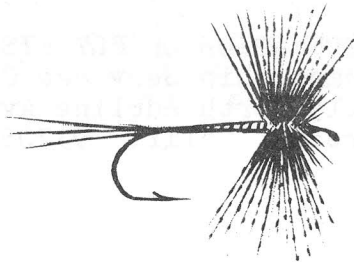
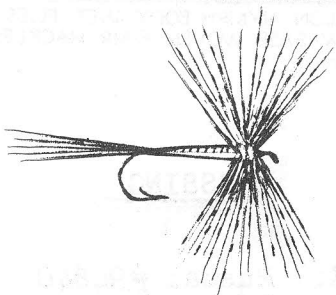


FIG. 8

GRANT'S "GRAY BUCK" DRY FLY

My method of weaving a hair hackle, which is quite different from the POTT method, produces a hackle with a narrow rib, comparable in size to a quill on a feather hackle, thereby making it suitable for the manufacture of dry flies.

This woven-hair hackle dry fly is the only one of its kind in existence. It is made of select Deer Hair and floats extremely well. An excellent fly for big-river dry fly fishing.

Hackle is put on reverse style so individual fibres extend forward to withstand pressure of false casting and then return to their original position as fly descends lightly on the water.

The general color of the finished hackle is tan and gray with a few flecks of black, and the fly itself when held in the hand or observed on the water presents a most natural appearance.

The woven-hair hackle was developed primarily for use on wet flies but it is my opinion that its greatest potential lies in its use as a dry fly hackle.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #94840
Size 10.

TYING Yellow
THREAD: (Herter's 5M)

THREAD Same - Formed
BODY: with tying thread

BODY Optional - Black
MARKINGS: Waterproof Ink
to simulate quill
if used.

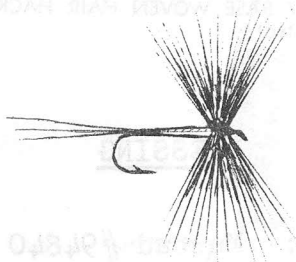
BODY 3 coats of clear
FINISH: celluloid enamel

TAIL: 5-7 Badger Guard
Hairs
(Natural)

WOVEN Gray-Tan Hair
HACKLE: from body of
whitetail deer.

5 hairs per tie
3/8" filaments
3/16" fringe
7/8" lateral length

GRANT'S "BROWN FOX" DRY FLY



The best hair for the weaving of hair hackles for dry flies is body hair of the northern whitetail deer, but the next most useful hair is obtained from the largest Canadian Fox and Gray Squirrels.

The texture of this hair varies and only those tails with firm, straight, distinctly-barréd hair should be selected. The hair on these tails must be at least two inches long.

Squirrel tail hair does not possess the inherent floating qualities of hollow deer hair, but it does have other qualities that make it highly desirable.

It is easier to sort and weave than deer hair and more durable in use.

It provides two natural colors, gray and ginger-brown, that are often present in adult aquatic insect life.

While both colors are quite visible when the fly is on the water the pattern described, which is hackled with Fox Squirrel hair, stands out exceptionally well on white-water riffles.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #94840
Size 10.

TYING Orange
THREAD: (Herter's 5M)

THREAD Same - Formed
BODY: with tying thread

BODY Optional - Black
MARKINGS: Waterproof Ink
to simulate quill
(if used)

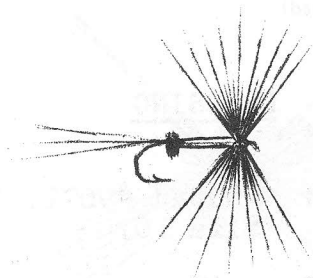
BODY 3 coats of clear
FINISH: celluloid enamel

TAIL: 5-7 Badger Guard
Hairs
(Dyed Brown)

WOVEN Fox Squirrel
HACKLE: Tail Hair
(Ginger-Brown)

6-8 hairs per tie

3/8" filaments
3/16" fringe
7/8" lateral length

GRANT'S "ROYAL BADGER" DRY FLY

Another hair that I have used extensively for woven-hair hackle dry flies is select badger. These long guard hairs are considerably stiffer than deer or squirrel, more durable than either, and about equal to squirrel for buoyancy.

The hair is easier to weave than the other two and does not require as many ties per hackle to produce the required lateral length of hackle for the size of fly being tied.

This results in a completed dry fly in which the individual fibres of the applied hackle are more widely spaced, and the fly is less bushy than deer or squirrel tail dry flies.

This is not necessarily an objectionable feature and may even be preferred by some.

Natural badger floats better than dyed, but is sometimes difficult to see on white-water riffles.

The name of the fly is derived from the semi-Royal Coachman body and the badger hair hackle, a combination as western as sagebrush.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #94840
Size 10.

TYING Scarlet
THREAD: (Herter's 5M)

THREAD Same - Formed
BODY: with tying thread

BUTT: Peacock Herl

BODY 3 coats of clear
FINISH: celluloid enamel

TAIL: 5-7 Badger Guard
Hairs
(Natural)

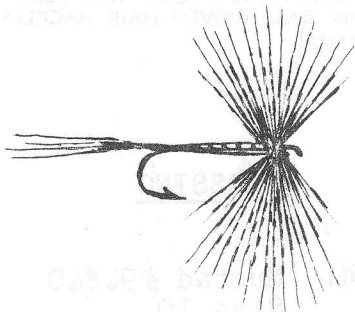
WOVEN Badger Guard
HACKLE: Hair
(Natural)

3-5 hairs per tie

3/8" filaments
3/16" fringe

7/8" lateral length

GRANT'S "BADGER-BUCK" DRY FLY



This fly was developed primarily to provide a large dry fly with sufficient buoyancy to float a regular weight long shank hook.

The name is derived from the fact that the hackle is woven from deer body hair to obtain the maximum in floating quality, plus the addition of tough badger hair to improve the durability.

The use of badger hair at the head of the fly also provides a bi-visible effect, although this is not as pronounced aid when natural badger is used. A bright orange frontal hackle, however, is a distinct aid.

This type of fly is especially useful in such water as may be encountered in Bear Trap Canyon on the Madison, or at any time when large terrestrials are being blown on the water.

Such flies are also useful to boat fishermen during the Salmon Fly hatch when the water is usually high and roily and large fish can be taken with surface flies.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9671, 2XLS
Size 10.

TYING (Herter's 5M)
THREAD: Orange

THREAD Same - Formed
BODY: with tying thread

BODY Optional - Black
MARKINGS: Waterproof Ink
to simulate quill
(if used)

BODY 3 coats of clear
FINISH: celluloid enamel

TAIL: 5-7 Badger Guard
Hairs
(Hot Orange)

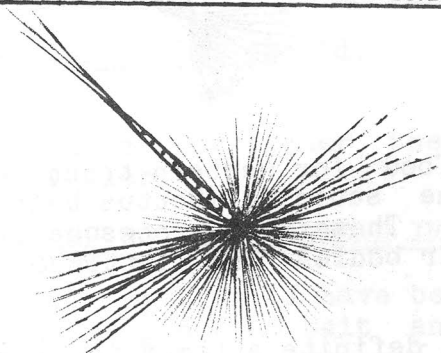
WOVEN Brown-Tan Hair
FLOATING from body of
HACKLE: whitetail deer

5 hairs per tie
1/2" filaments
1/4" fringe
3/4" lateral length

WOVEN Badger Guard Hair
FRONTAL (Dyed Hot Orange)
HACKLE:

3-5 hairs per tie
1/2" filaments
1/4" fringe
1/2" lateral length

(Hackle to be woven as one
integral unit with a lateral
length of 1-1/4").

GRANT'S "FLATWING BUCK" DRY FLY

This pattern was intended for use when big trout are actively feeding on Dragon Flies, but it is useful at any time large flies are on the water.

This fly is exceptionally light and buoyant for its size. The floating hackle is woven from deer body hair and the spent wings are formed from the same material. White deer hair could be used for the wings if more visibility is desired.

The basic principle of the spent-wing deer hair fly is contained in the VIC CRAMER, a Michigan pattern with flat deer hair wings and a yellow chenille body, no hackle.

The "CRAMER" is a rudimentary style that is ideal for commercial exploitation, like the Woolly Worm, because of its ease of tying, but it does not have the extreme buoyancy or durability of the more sophisticated fly described here.

A useful variation of this fly is a pattern which I call "Blue Damsel". It is tied with spent polar bear hair wings, dyed charcoal gray, a woven gray squirrel hackle dyed light blue, blue thread body spotted with black waterproof ink, blue polar tail.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9672, 3XLS
Size 10.

TYING Light Blue
THREAD: (Nymo "A")

THREAD Same - Formed
BODY: with tying thread

BODY Black Waterproof
MARKINGS: Ink - Spotted

BODY 3 coats of clear
FINISH: celluloid enamel

TAIL: 3-5 Polar Bear
Hairs
(Light Blue)

FLAT Gray-Tan Hair
SPENT from body of
WINGS: whitetail deer
(Natural)

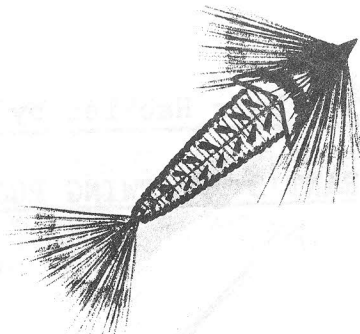
WOVEN Gray-Tan Hair
FLOATING from body of
HACKLE: whitetail deer
(Natural)

5 hairs per tie
3/8" filaments
3/16" fringe
1" lateral length

(Wings are tied forward over eye of hook, then divided and tied spent. Hackle is tied in behind wings and wound over their tied down butt ends. This requires a longer hackle because of the greater thickness of the base).

WESTERN BULLHEAD & MINNOW
PATTERNS

A DISCUSSION OF POPULAR
EXISTING PATTERNS



One of the chief sources of food for western trout, next to the large stonefly nymphs, is the sculpin (*Cottus bairdii*), generally referred to as "Bullhead". These are grotesque little fishes with heads too large for their bodies and flattened like the proverbial miller's thumb.

The famous "Muddler Minnow" is a definite attempt to imitate this sculpin, and its success is a credit to its originator, as well as proof that a good imitation of a food fish can be accomplished by the fly-tyer and used effectively by the fly-fisherman.

The western style "Muddler" as tied by DAN BAILEY, differs principally from that of DON GAPEN, the originator, in the size of the clipped deer hair head. The Bailey version offers a much larger head and is undoubtedly so designed to provide an even more realistic imitation of the sculpin.

The large clipped deer hair head on the Bailey "Muddler" creates somewhat of a paradox between appearance and efficiency as the head furnishes a high degree of buoyancy in an imitation that should be fished on or near bottom if we are to be consistent in our approach to proper presentation.

The "Terrible Troth Bullhead" described and illustrated in such an outstanding manner in the May 1969 issue of the United Fly Tyers' "ROUNDTABLE", a club magazine, is probably one of the best bullhead imitations yet devised. In a short article Mr. Troth has condensed the essentials of tying and fishing the western sculpin so well that anyone interested in this fascinating method of fly fishing for big trout would find it profitable to review it.

In A. J. McClane's article, "Matching the Minnow," Field & Stream, July 1968, the "Whitlock Sculpin" was featured, and at that time it was predicted that this fly would replace the Muddler for deep-water fishing, and I am inclined to agree with this prophecy, as it is an improved pattern.

The most authoritative and informative discussion to date of the sculpin and how to fish it is contained in David Whitlock's article, "The Sculpin and Its Imitation," Field & Stream, September 1970. Both of the latter two articles, in addition to Troth's, are

WESTERN BULLHEAD & MINNOW
PATTERNS

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

A DISCUSSION (cont'd)

must reading for either the prospective or established artificial minnow angler.

FISHING THE BULLHEAD IMITATION

All my life I have been privileged to watch experts using natural sculpins as bait and have been envious of their success in catching large trout. I personally hold the opinion that trout should be fished for with the artificial fly only, but I would be the first to concede that an expert bullhead fisherman will take more large trout in one season than the average fly man will take in a lifetime.

I say "privileged" because men who specialize in this form of fishing do become truly expert, and, while I decry the method, I feel that my observation of their tactics has been of benefit to me in attempting to duplicate their success with the artificial.

These men will ordinarily use a heavy fly rod and their tackle throughout, although stronger, is not unlike that used by a big-river fly fisherman. The cast, because of the weight of the bullhead, is made from the side with a swinging motion, and if distance is desired it can readily be attained by allowing loose slack to be fed while the bait is in flight. They work the riffles and the pockets behind large boulders, and they do not impart any motion to the bullhead, permitting it to tumble haphazardly on or near bottom while the water flow takes it within the feeding range of a big trout.

By employing artificials that resemble bullheads in size, shape and coloration, and fishing them on or near bottom where they spend all their life, it is possible for the fly-fisherman to catch some of the big trout that have always been looked upon as the personal property of the natural bait fisherman.

This can not be done, however, by the occasional or spasmodic use of such lures. You must devote a great deal of time to it and become a specialist. Assign entire fishing days to the exploration of this method and reconcile yourself to the fact that you may not get a single strike or fish, and a good day will be one that brings one or two heavy trout. We all follow the tendency to fish in a manner that gives us the most pleasure and success and this is due

WESTERN BULLHEAD & MINNOW
PATTERNSFISHING THE BULLHEAD IMITATION
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

to the fact that we have a limited amount of time to indulge in our sport and must make the most of it. However, to the retired angler, or the fortunate younger man who has the opportunity of spending an entire summer on one of our western streams, let me recommend this facet of fly-fishing as one that will provide the thrilling anticipation and personal satisfaction attendant to the catching of large trout.

For the veteran western fly-fisherman, sickened to the very depth of his soul by the politically-motivated hatchery-fish planting program, artificial bullhead fishing provides him with an interesting method of taking some of the large wild trout that still remain in the rivers. Electric shocking devices employed by fish and game biologists reveal that there are still a considerable number of three to six pound trout (browns) in the rivers but these will gradually diminish to non-existence as there is no brown trout planting program and the existing trout are not protected during their spawning season. The end of the line is now in sight for the western angler who knew the thrill of fishing for large wild trout, just as the handwriting is on the wall for the salmon and steelhead fisherman in coastal waters.

Because the fish are diminishing and access is becoming more difficult the western angler will have to develop more of the skill and knowledge manifested by his eastern counterpart. The time to fish for large wild trout on western rivers is in the Fall of the year, and the time of day is early morning or late evening. If fishing must be done during the day, try to be on the water on dull, cloudy, drizzly days that only a fisherman would tolerate. Take advantage of benefits afforded by sinking and wet-tip lines. Scale down your expectations, realize that you will take only one trout, or none, in a day's fishing. Thank God that you still have a big, clear river to wade and a few real trout to catch.

It would be difficult to improve on the "Muddler Minnow" or the "Troth Bullhead" or "Whitlock Sculpin", but my experience with woven-hair wet flies and nymphs has convinced me that there is no better method of constructing underwater lures for western fishing.

Over the years I have produced three bullhead imitations, two of which were in initial stages of their development long before

WESTERN BULLHEAD & MINNOW
PATTERNSFISHING THE BULLHEAD IMITATION
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

any of the above patterns were in existence. These flies have never been offered to the public, and it is futile for one man to try to reach a definite conclusion on the relative effectiveness of his own flies as compared to others because of so many factors involved, not the least of which is his own personal skill (or lack of it) and his allegiance to a theory which he considers superior.

The general characteristics of these flies, their dressings, and specific tying instructions are given on the following pages.

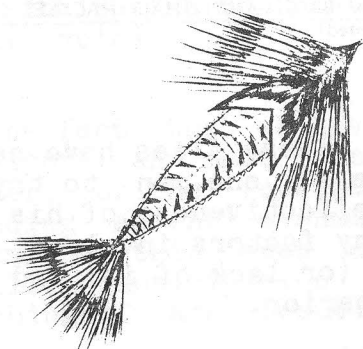
THE WESTERN MINNOW

Whereas the western bullhead is known to everyone who fishes western streams, the term "minnow" is extremely indefinite and is applied indiscriminately to the young of trout, whitefish and sucker, and, in some places where a distinct minnow species does exist, it is usually referred to as a "shiner".

There is no evidence to indicate that fly-tyers of this region have ever made a real attempt to duplicate any of these small fish, but they were using squirrel tail-wing wet flies, such as the "Picket Pin", before the word "streamer" was a part of fly-tying nomenclature, and I feel certain that many of these patterns were taken by trout who presumed them to be minnows of one kind or another.

The New England feather streamer has never enjoyed much popularity in the West, but the "Optic" bucktail and other hair-wing streamers are widely and effectively used. Marabou streamers in three to five inch wing lengths are now being used by boat fishermen, but whether they are taken as minnow imitations is open to question.

I have always felt that a pattern intended to imitate a minnow should somewhat approximate the form and size of a minnow and yet retain the characteristics of a large fly. The "Muddler Minnow" is neither hair nor feather streamer in the strict sense of the word, but derives its effectiveness more from coloration and form than from the weaving motion of a flowing wing material. This lack of wing motion in the "Muddler" was the reason for the development of the later pattern known as the "Spuddler", which incorporates hackle feathers in the wing structure, but it has not necessarily proven to be a significant improvement.

GRANT'S "BADGER BULLHEAD"

This pattern embodies two of the factors that are present in many of my wet flies and nymphs,-- a woven hair hackle and a nylon-covered body, shaped and weighted through the use of common brass pins.

In this case there are two woven hackles, one representing a tail, and a much heavier one at the shoulder suggesting the thick, flat head and flaring front fins of the natural sculpin.

The color of a natural sculpin varies but it is quite often a general olive on the back, speckled and mottled with yellow, brown and black, and the nylon body has been prepared to produce this effect. It has a cream yellow underside that is common to the natural.

The "BADGER BULLHEAD" weighs 12½ grains and will fish deep with a wet tip line, but in this type of fishing it may be necessary to use a sinking line on occasion. Leaders should never be longer than seven feet and never lighter than .011 as such flies can not be cast well with light leaders and they would be of no practical advantage.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9575, 4XLS
Size 4

TYING Yellow (Nymo "A")
THREAD:

OUTER Clear Oval Nylon
BODY: (Sunset Unifilament
#707 - 30#)

INNER
CORE: Yellow Wool

BRASS
PINS: 3/4" Pleating

BACK Black or Brown
MARKING: Waterproof Ink

BELLY Yellow base will
MARKING: show through

COVERING Mottled Green-Tan-
FEATHER: Black Pheasant
Body Hackle

WOVEN Badger Guard Hair
TAIL 5-7 hairs per tie
HACKLE: 5/8" filaments
1/4" fringe
1/2" lateral length

WOVEN Badger Guard Hair
SHOULDER 5-7 hairs per tie
HACKLE: 3/4" filaments
1/4" fringe
1½" lateral length

MAKING THE "BADGER BULLHEAD"

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

- STEP 1 - Form usual thread knob. Fig. 1
- STEP 2 - Attach tail hackle as shown in Fig. 1. Bind down hackle thread about 1/4" and cut off excess.
- STEP 3 - Wind tail hackle snug against thread knob. Bind hackle thread to hook shank for at least 1/4". Cut off excess hackle thread. (Fig. 2).
- STEP 4 - Take tying thread to point about 1/2" from eye. Fasten in clear oval strand (18" long) from this point to tail with close turns of tying thread. Leave tying thread at tail. (Fig. 2).
- STEP 5 - Form wool core (Fig. 3). If necessary review Step 3 for "Mossback" body.
- STEP 6 - Form pin-shaped foundation (Fig. 4). If necessary review Step 5 for "Creeper" body.
- STEP 7 - Mark back of foundation with black or brown waterproof ink as shown in Fig. 5. Foundation should have been given a coat of clear fly head cement and allowed to dry before marking.
- STEP 8 - Turn hook upside down in vise. Wind clear nylon outer body. If necessary review Steps 7 through 11 for "Creeper" body, ignoring floss stripe instructions. Fig. 6 shows nylon body wound.
- STEP 9 - Prepare feather for shoulder covering. This is done by coating the back of it with clear fly head cement and stroking between the thumb and forefinger until proper width. Allow to dry and then trim to shape shown. (Fig. 6).
- STEP 10 - Place hook in vise right side up. Attach shoulder covering feather by cementing to back with Duco Cement. Allow to dry thoroughly and then bind down quill on hook shank. Cut off excess quill.
- STEP 11 - Attach long shoulder hackle (Fig. 6). Bind hackle thread to hook shank about 1/4". Cut off excess.
- STEP 12 - Wind shoulder hackle clockwise to near eye of hook and fasten off thoroughly. Cut off excess hackle thread. Whip finish. Coat head with at least three coats of cement or celluloid.

Weaving Hair Hackles by George F. Grant

Originator of:

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

FIG. 1

FIG. 2

FIG. 3

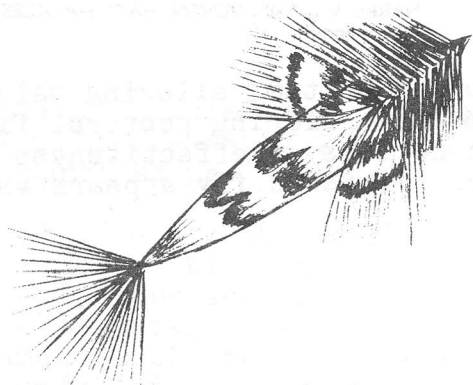
FIG. 4

FIG. 5

FIG. 6

MAKING THE "BADGER BULLHEAD"

FIG. 7

GRANT'S "MILLER'S THUMB"

Ann Haven Morgan, in her wonderful volume, "Field Book of Ponds and Streams", described the sculpin as having a head that was too large for its body and flattened like the proverbial miller's thumb.

The body of this pattern is formed on the same basic principle as that of the "Badger Bullhead", but in this version I have used nylon-coated wire trolling line, dyed yellow, in order to create a little heavier lure. This one weighs 14½ grains and is about as heavy a lure as I care to cast.

The "Badger Bullhead" and the all-hair "Squirrelpin" are intended to be only general representations of the natural sculpin but the "MILLER'S THUMB" is designed with a touch of realism.

The head is of thickly-woven squirrel hair, trimmed flat, and the tail is woven squirrel, dyed olive, although I often use fibres from the gray-green pheasant rump feather. The flaring fins and the back are mottled feathers from the Chinese Pheasant.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9575, 4XLS
Size 2.

TYING Yellow (Nymo "A")
THREAD:

OUTER Nylon-Coated Wire
BODY: Trolling Line .018

INNER
CORE: Yellow Wool

BRASS
PINS: 3/4" Pleating

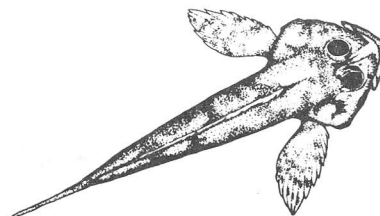
BACK Mottled Green-Tan-
FEATHER: Black Pheasant
Body Hackle

PECTORAL Same as back but
FINS: used in original
shape.

BELLY Yellow with glint
COLOR: of interior wire
adding flash.

WOVEN Squirrel Tail Hair
TAIL 10-15 hairs per tie
HACKLE: 5/8" filaments
1/4" fringe
1/2" lateral length

WOVEN Squirrel Tail Hair
SHOULDER 10-15 hairs per tie
HACKLE: 3/4" filaments but
trimmed to shape.
1/2" fringe
2" lateral length.



MAKING THE "BADGER BULLHEAD"
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 13 - Trim shoulder hackle on top and bottom, allowing balance of hair to extend from sides to simulate flaring pectoral fins. May be left untrimmed if desired with no loss of effectiveness but trimmed lure seems to be more natural. Finished fly appears as in Fig. 7.

MAKING THE "MILLER'S THUMB"

STEP 1 - Form usual thread knob.

STEP 2 - Attach tail hackle. Bind down hackle thread about 1/4" and cut off excess.

STEP 3 - Wind tail hackle snug against thread knob. Bind hackle thread to hook shank for at least 1/4". Cut off excess hackle thread.

STEP 4 - Take tying thread to point about 5/8" from eye. Fasten in nylon-coated wire trolling line (18" long) from this point to tail with close turns of tying thread. Leave tying thread at tail.

STEP 5 - Form usual wool core.

STEP 6 - Form usual pin-shaped foundation.

STEP 7 - Turn hook upside down in vise. Wind wire trolling line to form outer body. Fig. 5 shows body complete to this point.

STEP 8 - Select green phase body feather from Chinese Cock Pheasant. Should be approximate length of formed body. At this point it will be broad in shape as in Fig. 6.

STEP 9 - Prepare feather for back covering. This is done by coating the back of it with clear fly head cement and stroking between the thumb and forefinger until it assumes the shape shown in Fig. 7. It should be approximately the same width as the formed body. Allow to dry.

STEP 10 - Place hook in vise right side up. Attach back covering by cementing to body with Duco Cement. Allow to dry and then bind down quill on hook shank. Cut off excess quill. (Fig. 8)

MAKING THE "MILLER'S THUMB"
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 11 - Select two feathers as in Step 8 but smaller. Treat with fly head cement but do not stroke. Allow feathers to retain their natural shape. Set aside to dry.

STEP 12 - Attach feathers to hook shank, one on each side. They should be tied in mostly on top, but also slightly on the side of the hook shank. They should be tied with the convex side out as the markings are more vivid on this side, and they will flare sufficiently to simulate pectoral fins. Cut off excess quills. See Fig. 9.

STEP 13 - Attach long shoulder hackle (Fig. 10). Bind hackle thread to hook shank about 1/4". Cut off excess.

STEP 14 - Wind shoulder hackle clockwise to near eye of hook and fasten off thoroughly. Cut off excess hackle thread. Whip finish. Finish head with at least three coats of cement or celluloid.

STEP 15 - Trim shoulder hackle to approximate shape of sculpin's head. A turn or two of hackle nearest body can be left untrimmed (as shown) if desired. Finished fly will appear as in Fig. 11.

MAKING THE "SQUIRLPIN"

STEP 1 - Weaving the hackle for the "Squirlpin" is essentially the same as described for the woven hair rough body nymph (Step 1) except in this instance there are two separate hackles, each of them a full two inches long. The rear hackle is woven with the first 1/2" having filaments 1/2" long and when wound on this portion will form the tail. The next 1-1/2" will be clipped short to about 1/4" and in conjunction with the butt end fringe, clipped to a similar length, this will form a rather compact body when wound.

STEP 2 - Form thread knob as usual but place it further up the hook shank,--about opposite the hook barb.

STEP 3 - Tie in rear hackle snug against thread knob (Fig. 1). Tie down hackle thread for about 1/4" and cut off excess.

STEP 4 - Apply Duco Cement to hook shank as shown in Fig. 3 of instructions for tying the rough hair nymph.

MAKING THE "MILLER'S THUMB"

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

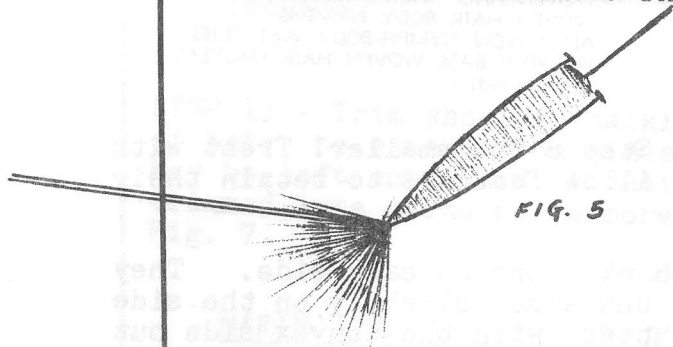


FIG. 5

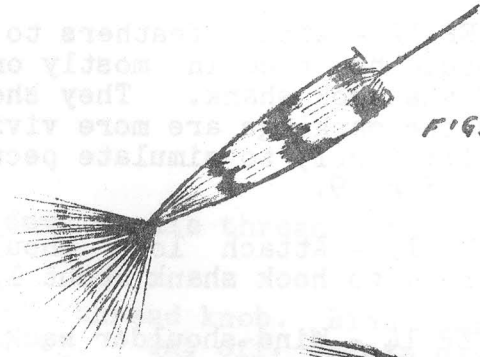


FIG. 8

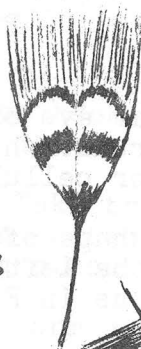


FIG. 6



FIG. 7

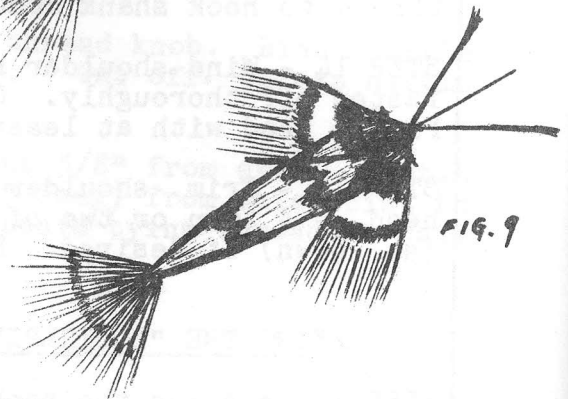


FIG. 9

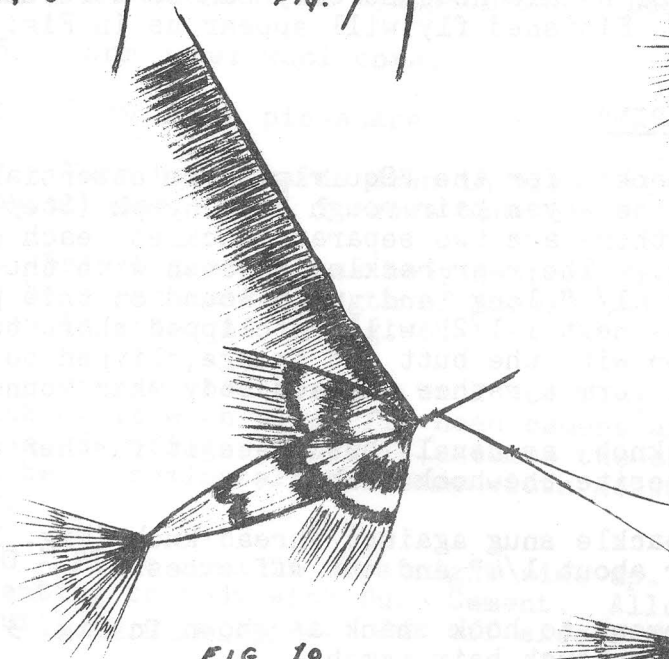


FIG. 10

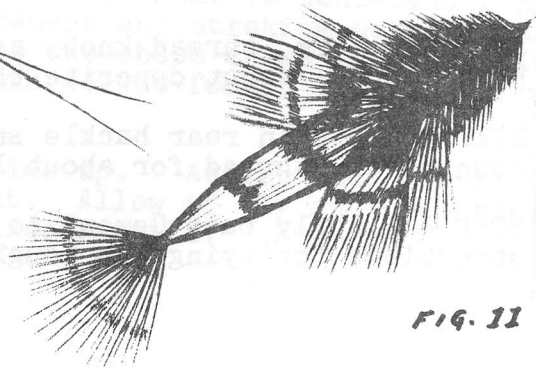


FIG. 11

MAKING THE SQUIRLPIN
(cont'd)

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 5 - Take the first two or three turns of the hackle close together and this will form the tail. Proceed to wind the balance of the hackle in open but close spirals to a point slightly more than half way to the eye of the hook and fasten off thoroughly. Cut off excess thread and whip finish. Fig. 2 shows tail wound and body portion of hackle poised for spiral winding.

STEP 6 - Remove lure from vise and trim semi-flat top and bottom. Trim sides to assume a rough version of the sculpin body shape. Taper toward tail being careful not to cut into tail hair. Fig. 3 is top view of trimmed body.

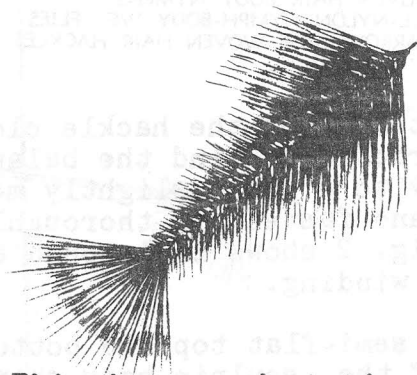
STEP 7 - We will assume that you have already woven the front gill and head hackle, which is a graduated filament hackle. The first 1/2" is the same as the body hackle and will blend into it. The next 1/2" is 3/8" in filament length and begins a gradual taper into the head. The final inch has 1/2" hairs and forms the bulk of the head and gill area.

STEP 8 - Tie in hackle snug up against body hackle tie-off. Cut off excess hackle thread and apply Duco Cement to top of hook shank. Work will now appear as in Fig. 4 with shoulder hackle tied in and ready to be wound to near eye.

STEP 9 - Take first two turns of hackle close together and then wind balance of hackle to near eye of hook in closer spirals than used on the body. Fasten off thoroughly and whip finish. Fig. 5 shows side view of completed lure to this point before final trimming.

STEP 10 - Remove lure from vise and trim semi-flat top and bottom. Little trimming is necessary on sides as it is desired that the fine tapered hairs be retained. A very careful shaping of the area is all that is required. Fig. 6 is top view of completed lure.

NOTE: An experienced weaver and tyer would find it difficult to make more than two of these all-hair lures in a full day's work but when it is considered that they would probably last him a lifetime if not lost it is, in my opinion, worth the effort. Large brown and black "hellgrammite" lures can be made in the same way and are equally effective and durable.

GRANT'S "SQUIRLPIN"

This is an adaptation of the rough-hair nymph previously described except that it is tied on a much larger hook and trimmed to a bullhead-like shape with a flat head and gill area and hair tail.

The hair used in this pattern is from the tail of a gray squirrel, and the name is the combination of the words squirrel and sculpin,--SQUIRLPIN.

The body is formed by first weaving a long hackle, applying it to the hook shank from barb to eye, and then trimming it to shape. This provides a lure with a soft body with plenty of movement and a rough appearance that seems to induce acceptance.

When dry this bullhead imitation has a weight of $7\frac{1}{2}$ grains, but it absorbs water so readily that when wet it increases to $13\frac{1}{2}$ grains and fishes deep. If additional weight is desired the hook shank can be ribbed with copper wire (.020) and the woven hackle spiraled in the open spaces.

This pattern was first conceived in 1938 and was inspired by an English importation which used grizzly saddle or large neck hackles to form the body, which was then clipped to shape.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9575, 4XLS
Size 4.

TYING Black
THREAD: (Herter's 5M)

RIBBING: (Optional)
Copper wire .020
(for weight)

or

Gold Oval - Med.
(for flash)

REAR BODY & TAIL Hair (Natural)

HACKLE: 10-15 hairs per tie

$1\frac{1}{2}$ " filaments on
first $1\frac{1}{2}$ "
(untrimmed)

$1\frac{1}{4}$ " filaments on
next $1\frac{1}{2}$ "
(clipped)

FRONT GILL & HEAD HACKLE: $1\frac{1}{4}$ " filaments on
first $1\frac{1}{2}$ "
(clipped)

$\frac{3}{8}$ " filaments on
next $1\frac{1}{2}$ "
(untrimmed)

$1\frac{1}{2}$ " filaments on
next 1"
(untrimmed)

Weaving Hair Hackles by George F. Grant

Originator of:

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
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NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

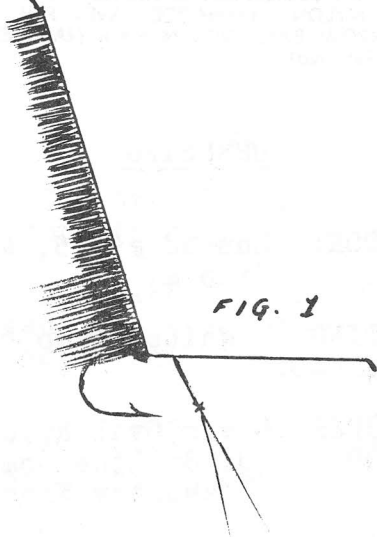


FIG. 1

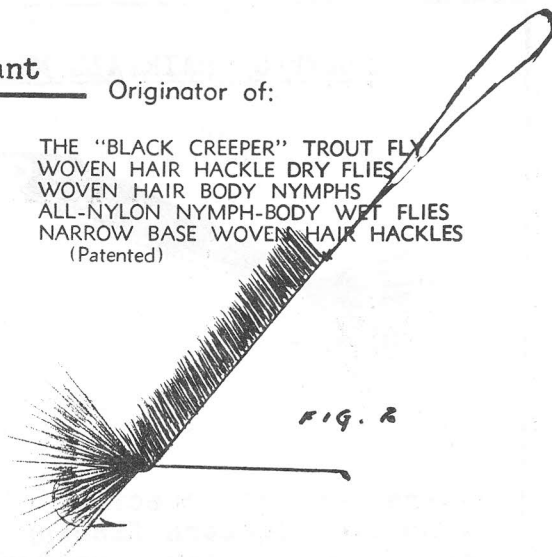


FIG. 2

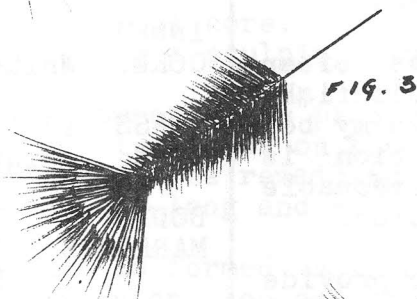


FIG. 3

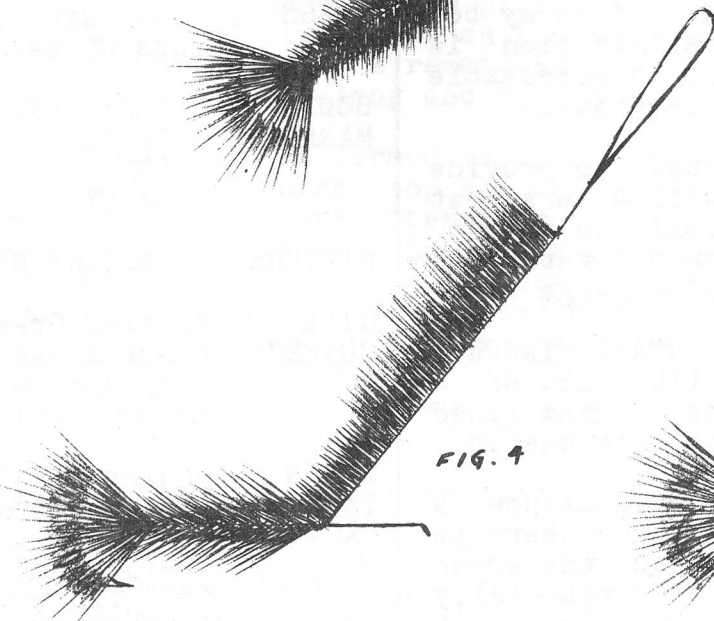


FIG. 4

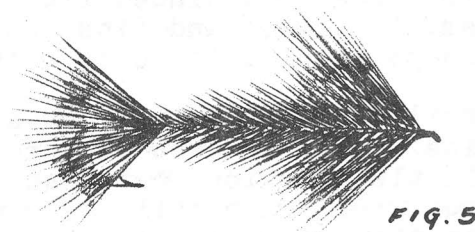


FIG. 5

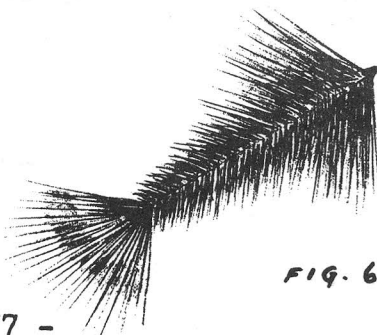
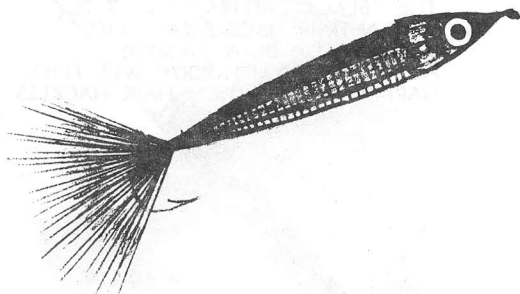


FIG. 6

MAKING
THE
"SQUIRLPIN"

GRANT'S "HAIRTAIL MINNOW"



There are no specific minnow patterns for western fishing and there are few, if any, natural minnows that are readily identifiable by the average western fisherman.

The word "minnow" is quite often applied to the young of whitefish, trout and sucker, and it is my belief that a meticulous imitation is not as important as a reasonable outline and proper presentation.

This pattern was created to provide the fly-fisherman with a lure that would somewhat approximate the appearance of a minnow and yet retain the characteristics of a large fly.

The body of the "HAIRTAIL MINNOW" is formed and tinted like that of a small fish, and its stream-lined shape enables it to be cast easily.

While the body of this minnow is its most prominent feature there is little question but that the woven squirrel hair tail adds materially to its effectiveness.

This lure weighs about 13 grains and attains adequate depth readily as there is practically no buoyancy in its make-up.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

DRESSING

HOOK: Mustad #9575, 4XLS
Size 4.

TYING White (Nymo "A")
THREAD:

OUTER Clear Oval Nylon
BODY: (U. S. Line Company
"Mahogany King" 27#)

INNER
CORE: White Wool

BRASS 1" long with tapered
PINS: points at each end.

BODY TOP: DK. GREEN
MARKINGS: CENTER: ORANGE
LINE: BLACK
BELLY: WHITE

PATTERN: EASTERN BROOK

GILL Mottled Green-Tan-
COVERS: Black Pheasant
Body Hackle (shaped
to conform)

WOVEN Squirrel Tail Hair
TAIL (Natural Gray)
HACKLE:
10-15 hairs per tie
5/8" filaments
1/4" fringe
1/2" lateral length

OPTIC White with Black
EYE: Center.

MAKING THE "HAIRTAIL MINNOW"

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 1 - Form usual thread knob.

STEP 2 - Attach tail hackle. Bind down hackle thread about $1/4$ " and cut off excess. (Fig. 1).

STEP 3 - Wind tail hackle snug against thread knob. Bind hackle thread to hook shank for at least $1/4$ ". Cut off excess hackle thread. (Fig. 2).

STEP 4 - Take tying thread to point about $3/8$ " from eye. Fasten in clear oval nylon (18" long) from this point to tail with close turns of tying thread. Leave tying thread at tail. (Fig. 2).

STEP 5 - Form usual wool core. Make it more slender and tapered than if you were tying a sculpin imitation. (Fig. 3).

STEP 6 - Take two common brass pins 1- $1/8$ " long and cut off their heads. Taper the blunt ends on the grinding wheel of a $1/4$ " power drill to approximate the remaining pointed ends. Prepared pins should now be about 1" long and should appear as in Fig. 4.

STEP 7 - Foundation is formed as in other flies with the exception that pins are tied in on top and bottom instead of on the sides as in this case we are attempting to simulate a minnow body. Do not attempt to tie the pin in at its point. Place the top pin in position as shown in Fig. 4 and begin fastening it in on the wool core near the shoulder. Wind tying thread tightly to the point of the pin near the tail and then back to starting point. At this juncture depress the point of the pin near the eye down to and in contact with the hook shank and bind it there with enough turns of thread to hold it firmly in place. (Fig. 5).

STEP 8 - Remove hook from vise and replace it in upside down position. Place bottom pin in position. Make sure that points at both ends are even. Bind in the bottom pin just the same as you did the top, and the work should now appear as in Fig. 6, except that, of course, the thread on the final return trip to the shoulder will have been laid on in very close turns and the finished foundation will be smooth.

STEP 9 - Give the foundation a coat of clear fly head cement and allow to dry thoroughly. Mark the foundation on both sides as shown in Fig. 7. See dressing for colors.

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
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WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
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NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

STEP 12 - The next step is to apply the "Optic" eye. My method of forming these eyes is to take a piece of fairly heavy glossy white paper, put it in the typewriter and strike the small "o". Remove the paper, fill in the center of the "o" with black ink, and then clip it out with a paper punch having a somewhat larger diameter than the "o". Coat the area where you want the eye with cement and place the paper eye thereon. Allow to dry. Repeat on the other side. Cover the entire head and eye area with a sufficient number of coats of clear celluloid to provide a smooth finish.

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*
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*
*      THIS BOOK
*
*
*      is affectionately dedicated
*
*
*      to my wife
*
*
*
*
*      ANNABELL THOMSON GRANT
*
*
*
*
*      an excellent fly fisher in her own
*      right, who always had the good
*      judgment and common decency not to
*      catch more trout than her husband.
*
*
*
*****

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Originator of:

THE "BLACK CREEPER" TROUT FLY
WOVEN HAIR HACKLE DRY FLIES
WOVEN HAIR BODY NYMPHS
ALL-NYLON NYMPH-BODY WET FLIES
NARROW BASE WOVEN HAIR HACKLES
(Patented)

MAKING THE "HAIRTAIL MINNOW"

FIG. 1

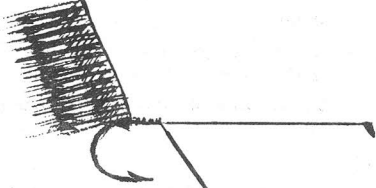


FIG. 2

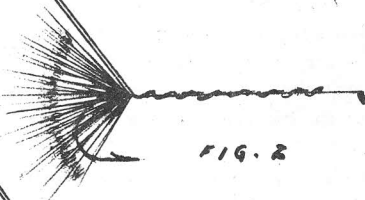


FIG. 3

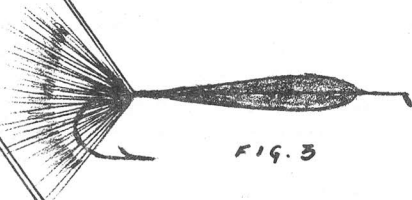


FIG. 4

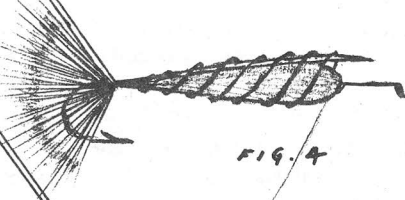


FIG. 5

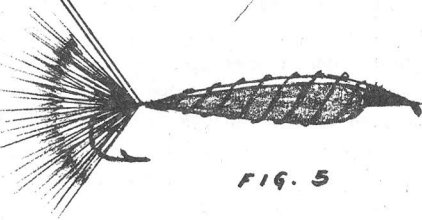


FIG. 6

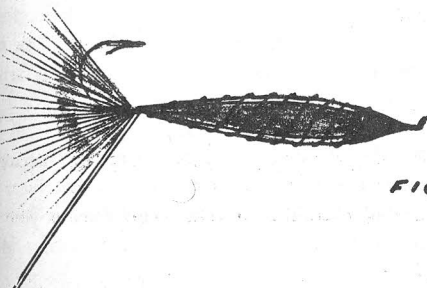


FIG. 7

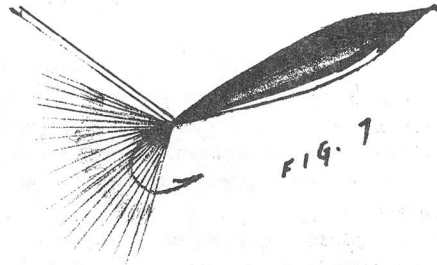


FIG. 8

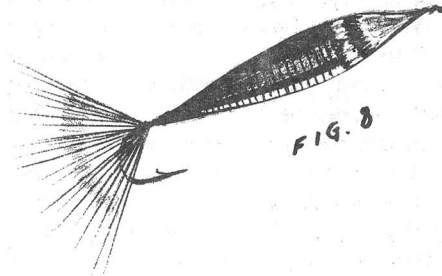
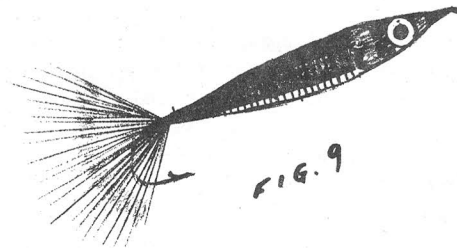


FIG. 9



RIVERS ABOUT TO DIE

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FLY FISHERMAN MAGAZINE
111. South Meramec Ave.
St. Louis, Mo. 63105

THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS is swiftly and systematically destroying the free-flowing rivers of your Promised Land. The Engineers, in cooperation with the Bureau of Reclamation and the support of profits-minded cohorts in Congress, are hell-bent on damming every trickle of water that flows downhill anywhere.

The arrogant, unshakeable, independent, irresponsible Corps of Engineers moves relentlessly on, constructing cement barriers that, for the most part, make unneeded lakes of irreplaceable rivers and streams. They do this on the pretext, usually, of "flood control," "irrigation," "electrical power," "recreation," and something called "water storage" . . . whatever that is.

In the western states alone, more than 200 dams have been constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers, referred to recently by Justice William O. Douglas as America's "public enemy number one." In the area of the Jefferson, Beaverhead and Big Hole Rivers—one small corner of southwestern Montana—nearly 100 "possible" dam sites have been surveyed by the Engineers.

In recent months the Army Engineers has proposed to build two dams on the upper Missouri River (90 per cent of its 2,300-mile course is *already* altered by dams), two on the Sun River, one each on the Big Hole River, the Allagash, the Buffalo, the Little Tennessee, and the Eleven Point River. Those are just *some* of the dams the Engineers hope to build, plan to build, *insist* on building. Others of *hundreds* planned include one on California's Eel River (guesstimated cost—\$398,000,000); West Virginia's South Branch, Potomac River; Pennsylvania's Skipack River; Oregon and Idaho's Middle Snake River; New York's Delaware River—guessed cost, \$70,000,000; New York's Upper Hudson River; Illinois' Sangamon River—guessed cost, \$75,000,000; Kentucky and Tennessee's Big South Fork, Cumberland River—guessed cost, \$200,000,000; Wisconsin's St. Croix River; Virginia's Rappahannock River—Engineer's estimated cost, \$79,500,000; Montana's Yellowstone River; and, finally, to end what could be a nearly endless listing of dams under construction and of dams proposed, the Army Corps of Engineers has even promoted construction of dams on Arizona's Colorado River and on the Yukon River in Alaska.

No sensible sportsman or conservationist opposes the construction of *necessary* dams. Sportsmen and others do not object if public wildlife land and recreational waters are destroyed because a dam is *vital*. But much so-called "progress" (profits-taking?) involving the destruction of valued rivers via dam building has been proved to be completely unnecessary. In many cases dams are built because land-owners or construction companies will make money, because workers flocking to the area will "bolster the local economy," and because dam building is what builders of dams do.

Our rivers are about to die!
And the public be damned!

LET'S FILL UP THE BIG HOLE

One of the loveliest rivers I know is the Big Hole in southwest Montana. It comes up in the Bitterroot Mountains, and flows for well over 100 miles to a junction with the Beaverhead and Jefferson Rivers near the town of Twin Bridges. In its upper reaches it has Montana grayling, one of the rarest fishes in North America, as well as large, brilliantly-colored brook trout. Farther down, as the river quickens and widens, is some of the finest rainbow trout fishing to be found anywhere, and still farther along—all the way to the Jefferson—is brown trout water of classic style.

The Big Hole flows clean and cool through quiet ranch-lands, now rushing through a rocky gorge, now winding through sweetgrass meadows, now singing over ripples that wash the banks beneath giant cottonwood stands. To the serious angler it offers all varieties of trout water—long, slick pools for dry flies; deep, curling runs for nymphs; heavy, deep water for big streamers; and lively, sparkling rapids for the wet-fly addict. There is almost no posted land, and I doubt if there is a rancher in all of the Big Hole Valley who's ever turned away a fisherman.

The Big Hole's typical brown trout weighs a pound. Two and three-pounders are common. Rainbows of comparable sizes are taken with regularity. I know of two 9-pound rainbows caught in one week on the Big Hole, and once the lower river gave up a 16-pound brown.

The Big Hole long has been famous among dedicated trout anglers, and hundreds of fly fishermen visit the river every year from distant corners of America and Canada. Foreign anglers have come only to see and to enjoy the Big Hole.

So we have this magnificent river—and just now it is there for all to enjoy.

But maybe not for long.

The Big Hole, if the Army Engineers have their way, is soon to die!

And the public be damned!

The Montana Conservation Department originally objected strongly to the Engineer's proposal to build Reichle Dam on the Big Hole about 17 miles upstream from Twin Bridges, pointing out that such a dam was not necessary for irrigation or flood control

(purported purposes for the construction of a dam estimated to cost about \$81,000,000), but later the department backed off in its opposition and fell silent. Knowing investigators reported that politicians "had a hand" in the Montana Conservation Department's sudden withdrawal from the fight to save the Big Hole. Montana sportsmen groups, however, as well as national sportsmen organizations such as the Izaak Walton League and Trout Unlimited continue to fight to save the Big Hole, to prevent construction of a dam and to keep the river in its free-flowing state. Many farmers and ranchers along the river also are strongly opposing a Big Hole dam.

Yet it is said to be "only a matter of time" before Reichle Dam goes up on the Big Hole, that the "powers that be" have decreed that—regardless of what the people want—the dam *will* be built, and so another of America's blue-ribbon trout streams will go down the drain.

A river destroyed is a river lost forever.

The natural beauties of this country belong to *all* Americans.

You can help save the Big Hole, help save *all* the rivers that certain elements would needlessly destroy, by voicing your opposition in letters to State Legislators, Congressmen, and the President himself.

If you . . . and I . . . don't act, the Corps of Engineers will continue as usual:

Rivers be dammed!

People be damned!

Tom McNally
Senior Editor

