

CDC Spinner

Wayne Luallen

Dry Fly

Level: 2

Introduction

Somewhat regrettably I discovered the pleasure of tying and fishing with CDC only a few years ago. It's use for spinners, among so many other applications, seemed only natural. This was reinforced when I saw Norwegian friend, O.T. Ljøstad, use it in such an application. I have slightly adjusted O.T.'s approach of wing application, added my favorite method of forking tails, and attempted to utilize tying methods that maintain the slender silhouette appropriate to the imago stage of Mayflies. One consideration when fishing with CDC: never use a paste type floatant. Such will only mat the barbs together and make the natural floatability of the material vanish. I prefer to use a desiccant floatant such as Nature's Spirit Versatility™ or Seidel's '800' Dry Fly Dressing™.

Materials

Hook: Level Eye or Down Eye dry fly, #12 and smaller, prefer Daiichi's 1110

Thread: Color to match insect; Danville's Fly-Master 6/0 or Giorgio Benecchi Products' 12/0

Tail: A hard hair such as Elk neck or synthetic such as Microfibbets™

Abdomen: Thread, stripped feather shaft or barb, biot, or sparse dubbing, color to match insect

Wing: Goose "CDC" in natural pale gray or white (Nature's Spirit Turkey "CDC" for larger flies)

Thorax: Dubbing, color to match insect

Head: Trimmed stubs of CDC

Instructions

1. Begin the thread 2-3 thread widths short of the point that the hook shank begins to curve into the bend. The "jamb knot" should proceed in the reverse direction from normal, that is toward the hook eye, not toward the bend. After laying down a smooth, flat layer of thread $\frac{1}{2}$ (on smaller flies) to $\frac{2}{3}$ (on larger flies) of the way to the eye, tie in 2 tail fibers wrapping with flat thread toward the hook bend. Wrap slightly onto the bend forcing the tails to tilt a few degrees down from parallel with the shank.

2. Twist the thread such that when the bobbin holder is softly lifted an open loop throws toward the hook bend. (This is accomplished for the right hand tier by spinning the bobbin holder anti-clockwise. That is, with the bobbin holder suspended below the shank, and looking down on it imagine a clock face with 3:00 to the right and 9:00 to the left. Spin the bobbin holder accordingly anti-clockwise. A left hand tier would spin the bobbin holder clockwise.) Let the loop fall between the top of the hook bend and the underside of the tails. Pull the thread toward the hook eye (Drawing #1,) thus forcing a slight split in the 2 tails and pulling them back up parallel with the hook shank. (If elevated tails are called for, secure the tail material only to the beginning of the bend, not down into it as described above.) Next allow the anti-clockwise twisted thread to fall back between the tails (Drawing #2.) Pull the thread forward and toward you to move the near tail out, then push the thread away to move the far tail out. Once positioned make two very firm progressive wraps of thread just in front of the tail to secure the tails from slipping back together.

3. For this example I will use a waxed and stripped barb from a “Peacock Eye” feather. With the barb on edge position the tip toward the eye with the darker edge of the barb down. While holding the tip in the tying hand, place the barb, still on edge, under the hook. Reach the opposite hand behind the fly and grasp the butt end of the barb. Lift up the barb so that it is trapped between the thread (still two wraps in front of the tails) and the hook shank. The space of 2 thread wraps forward of the tails allows room to wrap the barb just forward of, but not overlapping, the tails.

4. Wind a flat layer of thread to the forward most point of the thread already laid down, securing the tip of the peacock barb. Trim the barb tip even with this point. Wind the barb in the same direction the thread is wound so that the darker edge is toward the bend of the hook. Secure with 1-3 warps of thread and trim off the waste.

5. Select a rather full Goose (or Turkey on larger flies) “CDC” feather that is square at the tip with majority of barbs longer than the desired wing. Trim feather shaft and adjacent barbs from the tip just far enough so that the remaining barbs are as long or longer than the desired wing length.

6. Wind a smooth thread base toward the eye and back to a point 1 or 2 wraps behind where the wing should extend outward. With the feather tip toward the hook eye, concave side up, slide the barbs together while holding them with the tying hand thumb above and the middle or index finger beneath. Lay the feather on top of the hook and secure it to proper length with tight adjacent wraps proceeding to the termination of the abdomen. Now wind the thread forward to just in front of the wing and place a few tapered wraps under the CDC tips lifting them up similar as would be done with a Comparadun wing.

7. Apply dubbing to fill in the thorax both behind and in front of the wing. Flare the wing of CDC barbs with the tying hand thumbnail so that 50% is on either side. While holding the barbs in this position bring the butt end of the feather over the top, thus separating the tips to either side. Tie down with a few wraps of twisted thread (to help secure more tightly as well as reduce the area required.) Whip-finish with wraps reaching up under the CDC butts. Cut off the butts leaving slight stubs to represent the head of the insect. No head cement is necessary if whip-finished properly.

Personal Information

Wayne has tied most every type of fly he could get his vise clamped onto since 1974. He has demonstrated fly tying for numerous local, regional, national, and international events. Wayne’s work has been published in several magazines and books in the United States and Europe, including most recently *Tying the Classic Salmon Fly* edited by Mike Radencich. He received the Federation of Fly Fishers Wayne “Buz” Buszek Memorial Fly Tying Award in 1991. Wayne is especially fond of working on the details of fly tying.

Availability

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