

SPRUCE MOTH



By Bob Bates

When you take advantage of the various FFF related conclaves, shows, fly tying expos, etc. you will be amazed at what you find and learn. For me I also have a chance to photograph flies that people have developed or improved to make their fishing more successful. That was the exact situation I found at the 2007 Western Rocky Mountain Council Fly Fishing Exposition, in West Yellowstone, MT June 30, 2007.

Renee Menard from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho was showing us how she ties a fly that floats better in the North Idaho streams she fishes. She fishes a lot of riffley water, and this pattern has better buoyancy and rides higher. It bounces better in the currents and doesn't go under water when it gets wet.

She also uses it in every alpine and lowland lake she fishes. If fish are rising she will let it sit, but if nothing is happening then she will strip it a little.

It is her go to fly from March and to October. The rest of the year it is usually too cold to fish, and the water is a little stiff on top.

Much of the year it imitates the caddis flies on many waters, and in August it is a good imitation of the Spruce Moths found in some of the cutthroat streams.

Materials list:

Hook: Mustad 94840, 12-16

Thread: Danville, 6/0, tan

Body: Orange dyed, peacock herl

Wing: Deer belly hair

Tying steps



1. Tie three herls in by butts and wrap thread over the butts to a point about one third shank length back from the eye. This builds up the body a little.



2. Wrap herls forward to about the one third point, secure and trim excess.



3. Cut off a pinch of deer hair, and clean out the under fur if necessary. Keep the butts even, and tie the hair in with the butts to the rear. This is the reverse of what most tiers do, but it gives the fly more buoyancy.



4. After the hair is tied in, pull up the tips, half hitch and whip finish behind the eye. Trim some of the tips.

Closing comments: You don't always have to tie flies by the book in order to catch fish. If you think another way might be better, try it and see if it works. If it does work then teach it to the rest of us.

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