

MARCH BROWN SOFT HACKLE



By Bob Bates

It is almost November, and at this time of the year fingers are getting cold, hatches getting sparse and insects are getting smaller. So right now I am thinking about next spring when there are nice hatches. One nice spring hatch at least for the Western U.S. and Canadian anglers is the March Brown (Genus *Rhithrogena*). Depending on location, hatches start from late February (costal Oregon) to mid-May (Alberta, Canada). These mayflies are large enough, sizes 12-14, to attract hungry trout. For some species the nymphs thrive in fast turbulent streams, and other species prefer slower waters even placid meandering mountain streams. So be sure to talk to friends in your fly club or other local anglers. Fly shop personnel are usually the most forthcoming.

Jeff Childress of Idaho Falls, ID tied this version of a soft hackle pattern for us at the 2008 NW Fly Tyers Expo in Albany, Oregon.

“Wonderful fly,” he said. Jeff fishes it on the South Fork of the Snake River. He uses a floating line and a leader that is the same length as the rod. He casts one quarter upstream and mends the line so it does not get ahead of the fly.

Material list:

Hook: Mustad3906B, size 12 but sometimes down to 18

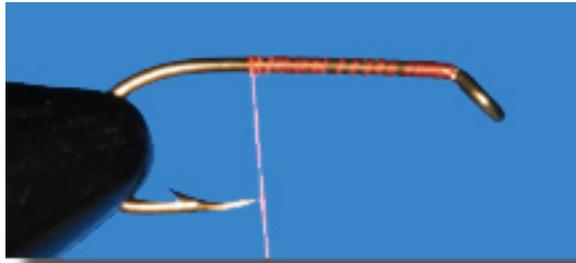
Thread: Orange 8/0

Rib: Gold Mylar tinsel

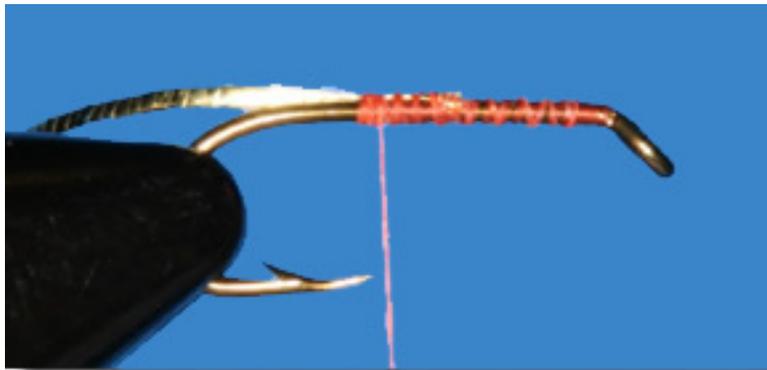
Body: Hares ear dubbing, dark

Hackle: Brown partridge

Tying steps:



1. Put thread on hook starting behind the eye and wind backward to a position on the shank over the point.



2. Tie on the Mylar ribbing.



3. Dub hare's ear, trying to taper the body larger forward. One of the biggest dubbing problems for new tiers is using too much at one time. Keep it sparse, and always spin it in the same direction between the thumb and first finger. Putting pressure on dubbing while twisting helps control it. When all else fails put a little dubbing wax on the thread.



4. Counter wind rib. For the new tiers that means winding the rib in the opposite direction from how the thread is wound. If there are some scraggly hairs just trim them off.



5. Strip fuzzy fibers off a brown speckled partridge feather. Tie it in by the tip with the dull side facing the hook.



6. Trim excess feather tip.



7. Then wrap partridge no more than twice around the hook. Secure and trim excess partridge feather. Finish the fly with a small neat head and a whip finish. If you want, put a little head cement on the head.

Closing comments: This is a great pattern that is fairly easy to tie, and it catches fish. What more could you ask for? Tie a few and try them before the March Browns start coming off. It also looks like a pattern that would work when chironomids are getting ready to hatch.

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