

April 2021

## Hendrickson Emerger

Ron Manz, BRSC member – Nekoosa Wisconsin

The celebrated “Hendrickson” (*Ephemerella subvaria*) hatch is one of the most exciting of the year for fly anglers. With rising trout during a springtime afternoon, usually not many gnats and mosquitos, and greens appearing along the banks, how could one ask for more? As Ernest Schwiebert once wrote, “This is the time to take large trout on the dry fly.” Happily, the hatch usually coincides with Wisconsin’s general fishing opener.

I have been blessed to have fished dozens of these hatches on the Brule, Namekagon, and other rivers. I’ve found the most effective fly patterns are usually parachutes (including the Klinkhammer style) or split-tail deer hair comparaduns. Just ask my son Cordell! On broken water, the traditional hackled Catskill tie is hard to beat as it dances down the riffles just like the emerging naturals. On the “Nam,” a #14 Adams works miracles! Sometimes, none of these do the trick well, especially on warm windy days when the duns get off the water almost immediately. At these times, a rising nymph or emerger can be the answer.

Many years ago, I designed an emerger that became so popular with anglers I could hardly tie them fast enough! I’ve also had great success with this fly even when the fish are taking the dry adult but are being ultra-selective. It is best fished “down and across,” just under the surface with a subtle twitch or two as it nears an active fish. If forced to fish upstream, as is often the case, the fly should be tied with a CDC loop wing to create a bubble. Omit the peacock herl wing case and put a little more emphasis on the legs if tying a wing loop. Fish it dead drift.

Most adult Hendricksons are in the #14 size range. For this emerger, I use a #16 Tiemco 200R hook which has a longer shank and a York bend. I like the hook for all nymphs and soft hackles.



*Ron’s Hendrickson emerger.*



*Ron’s loop-wing version.*

## **Recipe**

1. *Hook: 16 Tiemco 200R or 200RBL (barbless), size 16.*
2. *Thread: Dark brown size 8/0.*
3. *Tail: Wood duck flank feathers.*
4. *Rib: Fine copper wire.*
5. *Abdomen: Dark brown turkey tail fibers or darkened pheasant tail fibers.*
6. *Wing: Dark dun CDC fibers extending slightly past the body.  
(For the loop wing version: Tie 2 dark dun CDC feathers in by the tips with the tips facing forward. If discernable, the "cupped side" of the feathers should be up. Then, skip to step 8).*
7. *Wing case: several strands of peacock herl.  
(Note: omit if doing a loop wing as indicated in step 6).*
8. *Thorax: Amber or tan ostrich herl toned down a bit with brown marker and flattened on the bottom.*
9. *Legs: Hungarian partridge fibers.*
10. *Pull the peacock herl wing case forward and tie off.  
(For the loop wing version, pull the CDC feathers forward making a small bubble as the "loop wing," and tie off. There is no wing case in this version).*

### *Note by Dean Wellman*

Ron started the Brule River Classics rentals and fly shop in Brule. Ron is a long-time member of BRSC and was the BRSC Recording Secretary for several years. Ron is a master fly tier and guide. Several years ago, I remember having a conversation with Ron about the Hendrickson hatch. One thing that I never forgot was his comment about how he fishes the hatch. He said, "I hunt when the Hendricksons are hatching." He actually does that when he fishes most hatches, patiently watching until he spots a nice fish actively feeding before he fishes.

Thank you Ron!