

2021 Flies



Sucker Spawn Fly

Hendrickson Emerger

Foam Stimulator

Foam Hex Fly

Rat Face McDougal (Irresistible)

Foam Ant

October Caddis or Great Brown Sedge

Black Squirrel G.P. (General Practitioner)

March 2021

Sucker Spawn Fly

Dean Wellman, BRSC Financial Secretary – Brule, WI



A friend introduced me to the “Sucker Spawn” fly several years ago. It was mid to late April, and he wanted me to get him into some of our spring run steelhead. The water was just the way I like it, high (difficult wading), dropping, clearing, and right about in line with the smelt and sucker runs.

My friend had his 9-foot, 7-weight fly rod rigged with floating line and an indicator. We discussed what to use and in his fly box he had these flies that he called sucker spawn that were dressed in the right colors that I like for the conditions we had.

In the first spot I had him fish, he hooked 3 fish. I have always carried these with me in the spring since then. The same techniques apply for me when I am fishing the “flats” in the rocks. I use an unweighted fly with weight about 18 inches above the fly. My “Glo Bug” yarn in my favorite spring colors work great. There are many variations of materials, colors, and sizes of this fly. It is a very quick tie.

Recipe

1. *Hook: Gamakatsu or similar egg hook for steelhead – size 4 or 6.*
2. *Thread: Orange or yellow Danville 210 denier.*
3. *Body: 3 thinner strands of egg white, yellow, and Oregon cheese yarn.*
4. *Start the thread at the eye and wrap to the hook bend. Tie in the 3 strands at the same time (I twist the 3 strands together).*
5. *Use your bodkin to push the strands back to form a small bubble (or loop) and tie off.*
6. *Repeat the process, forming bigger bubbles as you progress forward and then smaller ones at the head of the fly. Tie off, snip the strands past the eye, and whip finish.*

April 2021

Hendrickson Emerger

Ron Manz, BRSC member – Nekoosa Wisconsin



Ron's Hendrickson emerger.



Ron's loop-wing version.

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 or mosquitos, and greens appearing along the banks, how could one ask for more? As Ernest Schwiebert 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.

Recipe

1. Hook: Tiemco TMC 200R or 200R BL (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 (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 in the bottom photo, 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!

May 2021

Foam Stimulator

Dean Wellman, BRSC Financial Secretary – Brule, WI



This is a foam version of Randall Kaufman's Stimulator and imitates the large stonefly (*Pteronarcys dorsata*) that hatches in the Brule, primarily the first 2 – 3 weeks of June. It is the largest fly of the year with a length of 1¾ to 2¼ inches. This version imitates a female with an egg sack and is virtually unsinkable.

At mating time, nymphs crawl out of the water and emerge from their exoskeletons, morphing into adults ready to mate. They are clumsy fliers and the large adults are easy targets for any flycatchers. The Brule hatch seems to be mostly nocturnal and improves their chances of surviving to mate. For those who visit the Twin Gables restaurant, check the west-facing entrance on your way in for breakfast during those first couple weeks in June. You may very well see them. I'm not sure your better half will like you pointing them out, but for

the fly angler they are significant. If you gently grab one by the wings and turn it upside down, a female will have a large egg sack at the end of her abdomen. You will also notice the orange abdomen is segmented.

To me, the egg laying female is the best pattern as the females drop their egg sacks during daylight. Egg sacks are released as the females literally fall from the sky, hitting the water with a "plop." The released egg sacks break through the surface film, sinking to the bottom where survival of the fittest takes over. The females then "skitters" to the bank or anything they can attach to and dies. The skittering is what gets the attention of some of the largest critters in the river.

Randall Kaufman has an awesome video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmSGdeJwmLo>) that's well worth watching.

Recipe

1. *Hook: Size 6 light wire 3XL for hoppers or stoneflies.*
2. *Thread: Orange 4/0 Kevlar. Start the thread about 1/8th of an inch from hook eye and cover the shank to just before the bend. Return the thread to the starting point.*
3. *Egg sack: On top of the hook, tie in a strip of 3 mm thick yellow foam (3/16th of an inch wide x 1½ inches long) with firm open wraps to where your thread ended at the hook bend. Trim the foam so that it extends about 3/16th of an inch past the bend of the hook and trim to your liking to make the egg sack. Return the thread to the starting point.*
4. *Abdomen: Tie in a strip of 2 mm orange foam (2½ inches long tapering from 1/8th inch to 1/4th inch wide) by the narrow end and secure it to the side of the hook shank in firm open wraps along the hook shank to the rear of the hook. Return the thread to the starting point. Securely wrap the orange foam forward with slightly overlapping wraps to the thread position and tie off. Remove the excess foam and use the thread to make a taper to the hook eye. Return the thread to the starting point 3/8th of an*

inch from the hook eye. Use a brown marker and cover the orange foam then wipe it off, making a dusky colored orange with a segmented look.

- 5. Wing: Tie in a deer hair wing long enough to cover the egg sack. If you don't know how to do this, I suggest you watch Kaufman's video to see how it's done. Flash can be added as an underwing of pearl Flashabou or clear white Sparkle Emerger Yarn.*
- 6. Legs: Tie in a size 8 grizzly hackle. This should be about 5/16th of an inch back from the hook eye. Add a drop of super glue. While it dries, pull the wing together and down to improve the profile of the natural. Move the thread to the hook eye.*
- 7. Thorax: Dub a thin layer of "dirty yellow" dubbing (I combine Whitlock red squirrel abdomen and red squirrel thorax together) to cover the thread from the hook eye to the grizzly hackle. On top of the hook, tie in a 1-inch long piece of 3 mm white foam tapered from 3/16th of an inch to 3/8th of an inch at the point of the grizzly hackle. Tie it in by the wide end (it can push against the wing to help push it down). Make 3 foam segments by picking up the foam and advancing the thread forward towards the hook eye between segments. Trim the foam off just behind the hook eye, or let it cover the eye of the hook if you prefer. Use the brown marker again to color the white foam. Palmer the hackle to the hook eye trying to get 2 full wraps in the first 2 segments and a full wrap the last segment and whip finish. Optional to trim off fibers in the top and bottom of the hackle.*

June 2021

Foam Hex Fly

Dean Wellman, BRSC Financial Secretary – Brule, WI



The *Hexagenia limbata* mayfly is the major hatch on the upper Brule. I have been fishing this hatch since my early teens. They usually start around the last week of June to the first week of July.

Our pattern this month offers another twist to using foam. Foam's excellent floatation keeps the fly floating reliably during the nighttime when it's sometimes hard to know if your fly is waterlogged. I often use a white deer hair wing for night fishing to help me know where the fly is.

There are many hex patterns. Tim Neal's is another excellent one (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYxIbT5fElc>). Tim also does an excellent job showing how to tie parachute style flies.

Recipe

1. *Hook:* Size 6 2XL to 3XL light wire dry fly hook such as a Tiemco TMC 5212.
2. *Thread:* Yellow 4/0 Kevlar. Start the thread behind the hook eye and wrap to above the hook barb and return the thread to the midway point of the shank.
3. *Tail:* Moose mane or body hair. Stack several fibers and attach them around the midpoint of the hook. The tail should be about as long as the hook shank. Firmly wrap over the fibers to the bend. Use one or two wraps under the tail to splay them and another back on top. Trim out excess to your liking. Bring the thread forward to about 5/16th of an inch from the eye. Adding a little cement here will keep the tail in position and prevent it from twisting when.
4. *Body:* 2 or 3 mm thick yellow Wapsi Fly foam. Cut a strip about 3 inches long that is 1/8th inch wide. Attach the foam strip on top of the hook shank at the thread position behind the hook eye. Use firm 1/8th of an inch spaced overwraps to secure the strip on top of the shank back to the tail. Return the thread following the same wraps back to 1/4th of an inch behind the hook eye. Wrap the foam forward. The foam will stretch so you can make a slightly tapered body by pulling tighter at first and then relaxing the foam as you wrap forward. Tie off at 1/4th of an inch behind the eye.
5. *Wing:* White, olive yellow, or natural deer body hair. Make an upright wing with a post for the hackle. The foam leaves a nice ramp to tie in the wing.
6. *Hackle:* Yellow grizzly, brown olive, or brown and grizzly combined. Tie the hackle in front of the wing post on the shank and in parachute style. It's important to start the hackle wraps at the highest on the post with succeeding wraps below each other so the hackle doesn't slide off the post. Secure the hackle to the shank and remove excess. A small drop of super glue here will help ensure the hackle doesn't come off. Dub under the hackle with *Hexagenia* Antron dubbing, making a nice taper to the hook eye, and whip finish.
7. *Last touch:* Use a brown marker color up the body so that it is a dusky, yellow-brown. This is not necessary for night fishing.

July 2021

Rat Face McDougal (Irresistible)

Dean Wellman, BRSC Financial Secretary – Brule, WI



The Rat Face McDougal was originally tied by Harry Darbee of New York in 1939. It is more widely known as the “Irresistible,” which was created by Joe Messinger of West Virginia in the 1930s. They are basically the same fly. I was introduced to this fly by John Rogers in the early 1960s. He and Sarah ran the first fly shop in Brule out of their old farm house, which once stood where the Brule River Classic Cabins are now. My dad also bought me an 8½-foot Fenwick fiberglass fly rod with a fly line to match from John. I spooled the fly line on my Pflueger Medalist. What an improvement that was over my old 9-foot hand-me-down that felt like a water-logged willow stick!

John told me to use what he called an “Irresistible” for the fast water around Co-op Park down through the Hwy FF water. This fly became one of our favorites for daytime fishing during the July doldrums in our best spots in that area. We fished in tennis shoes and swim trunks! True to John’s words and due to the fly’s high floatation, it became a favorite because it worked. It is user friendly and was especially good for a kid like me starting out back then.

Recipe

1. *Hook: Sizes 8 – 12 standard barbless dry fly (or pinch the barb down). A size 12 Daiichi 1110 shown in the photo.*
2. *Thread: White Veevus 50D. This is a great thread for spinning deer hair.*
3. *Tail: Moose body hair, Coq de Leon, or any stiff fiber. Moose hair shown in the photo.*
4. *Body: Spin high quality deer hair, starting at the tail. Use a clump about 3/16th of an inch in size each time. Spin the hair by making one loose wrap at the mid-point of the hair bundle and then gently tightening with a second wrap as you let go of the hair. This will cause the hair to spin around the hook shank. Make a third tight wrap and move the thread ahead and pull the spun hair backwards out of the way. Repeat the process, pushing the hair towards the tail with the fingernails on your thumb and index finger each time, until the spun hair is about 3/16th of an inch from the hook eye. Tie off the thread (I use a couple of half hitches), cut the thread, and trim the body with your best scissors (I go outside!). Body should be flat on the bottom and tapered on sides and top.*
5. *Hackle: If you cut the thread to trim the body, re-start the thread where you left off. Tie in the hackle now. Wrap the hackle after the wings are completed. Ginger, brown, or brown and grizzly. Photo shows brown and grizzly.*
6. *Wing: Grizzly hackle tips. Tie forward, stand up, and divide. I sometimes use white calf tail.*
7. *Finishing the fly: Complete the hackle starting behind the hackle tips, moving a head of the wings and finishing at eye. Whip finish and apply your favorite head cement.*

I’d like to thank board member Mike Zicus for suggesting this fly and for rekindling some old memories for me.

August 2021

Foam Ant

Dean Wellman, BRSC Financial Secretary – Brule, WI



There is one thing that you don't want to have happen in August on the upper Brule. That is to get caught on the river during a winged ant hatch (recolonization) without any ant patterns. Luckily for me on a day above the "Falls," I experienced this yearly ritual and had some generic cinnamon ant patterns in my box. Ever since, ant patterns have always been one of the necessities for late summer.

There are many good ant patterns to choose from, and foam is widely used for ants. Here's a simple tie using foam for the body.

Recipe

1. *Hook: 1x long fine wire dry fly in sizes 12 – 16. A size 12 is shown in the photo.*
2. *Thread: White Veevus 50D G.S.P. This flat thread will not cut the foam as easily as other threads and the white colors up well with a marker. Start the thread behind the hook eye and wrap the entire shank to the hook bend and then back to just past the barb.*
3. *Body: Use a strip of 2 mm thick white foam that is 4 mm wide and 1½ to 1¼ inches long (Downsize this a bit for the smaller-sized hooks.). Trim each edge of the strip so that it looks like a square-stern canoe (but with the bow squared off too!). The widest part of the strip (4 mm) will be about 1/3rd the distance from one end. Call this the rear end, which will form the rear segment of the fly. Each end of the strip should be about 2 mm wide after it's been trimmed. Tie the foam on with the rear end at the hook bend. The foam piece should be pointing rearward as if it was a tail. Using firm but gentle wraps secure the foam at the hook bend with spaced wraps, then with increasingly firm wraps return the thread to about 1/3rd the shank length from the bend. Next, fold the foam forward and while firmly pulling, tie off the rear segment, making it look like the rear end or abdomen of an ant. Tie the forward-facing part of the foam to the hook while pulling firmly on the foam, use slightly spaced (not so very firm) wraps, stopping just short of the hook eye. Return the thread to the middle of the hook shank with slightly firmer wraps, stopping about 1/8th inch short of the rear segment. Now, pull the forward-facing foam rearward and tie it off so that there's about 3/32nd of an inch gap between the rear segment and front segment that you just formed. The excess foam should be sticking up at this time. Trim it as closely as possible. Form the center area between the rear and front segments with increasingly tighter wraps.*
4. *Marker: Light tan Prismacolor. Use the marker to color the foam at this point.*
5. *Wing: Flat pearl diamond braid. The consensus seems to be that trout see the flash of the glossy wings of an ant because most activity occurs on bright warm days. Using a 1-inch piece, tie it in at the middle, pull it to the rear, and secure it with a few wraps. Holding the diamond braid past the rear segment cut it about 1/8th inch longer than the rear segment. Next use a tooth brush to comb out the*

diamond braid. This only takes a couple strokes. Trim the wing a little so the tip has an oval shape and is angled rearward.

6. *Legs: Use hackle or rubber legs. If using hackle, a ginger Cree hackle (see <http://www.flyangleronline.com/flytying/cree.php>) that is one size smaller than the hook (in this case a size 14) with a black center works great. Use a few wraps to fill the center area of the ant. Whip finish and you're done (optional trim the hackle on the bottom). If using rubber legs, I like fine Sili legs tied in X-legs fashion. I use a little fine dark brown dubbing to fill in the center, adding some contrasting color between the 2 body segments.*

I'd like to thank board member Mike Zicus for suggesting this fly.

September 2021

October Caddis or Great Brown Sedge

Dean Wellman, BRSC Financial Secretary – Brule, WI



Our “October caddis” (*Pycnopsyche* spp.) is known as the Great Brown Sedge. They hatch primarily in September on the Brule. I found one on my entryway yesterday morning, September 6th. They are the largest of the stick builders, meaning the larvae use sticks and small pebbles for their cases. They spend their time crawling on the stream bottom. Trout eat them, sticks and all.

The hatch predominately occurs in late evening to nighttime hours. I don’t think the hatch present itself very well to the fish because it occurs in shallow water and at night. I have observed many of the stick cases about hatch time on inside turns while wading, which is a good reason to watch where you step.

I’ve been introduced to 2 versions of this fly for steelhead. One originated from an old timer in Michigan on the Pere Marquette. He fished the fly religiously for steelhead. His fly was tied almost exactly like a pattern by Mike Brooks, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAkZAbEdiQg>. The only difference was that the old timer didn’t tie in a tail and used an olive body. Mike Brooks shows you how to tie the wing.

The second version was introduced to me by my friend Bob Carlson after he had returned from a successful trip to the Kalama River in Kalama, WA in September many years ago. There he caught steelhead dead drifting an October Caddis Fly from the local fly shop. We adapted it to the Brule by down-sizing it and found our steelhead took it as well. The following recipe is for the Kalama River version.

Recipe

1. *Hook: Tiemco TMC 200R – size 6.*
2. *Thread: Orange, white, or color of choice. I used white Veevus 50D wrapped from 1/8th inch behind the hook eye to just above the hook point.*
3. *Tail: Optional. Use the same deer hair as the wing. About 3/8th of an inch long.*
4. *Rib: Tie in a 4 or 5 inch piece of small or brassie gold wire to be used to secure the palmered hackle on the body.*
5. *Hackle: Tie in a webby hackle feather in size 12 – 14 at the tip. Make sure it is long enough so you can get 5 or 6 wraps. I used grizzly dyed orange on the fly in the photo. Palmer wrap this after the body is dubbed in Step 6.*
6. *Body: Sparsely dub a body to within 1/8th inch of the eye. On the fly in the photo, I used one of my favorite dubbings, which is Dave Whitlock’s Red Squirrel Abdomen.*
7. *Palmer the hackle in fairly open wraps getting 5 or 6 wraps to within 1/8th inch of the hook eye and secure and trim.*
8. *Reverse wrap the gold wire getting the same 5-6 wraps to within 1/16th inch the hook eye, secure and trim. Counter wrapping secures the palmered hackle so hopefully it will withstand a few beatings from fish.*
9. *Wing: The wing is the same deer hair long enough to go to the end of the tail. Tie it fairly sparse secured in the style of an elk hair caddis. Whip finish. When you cement the head, you can pull the wing to the rear a little to get it to lay at an angle. A little trimming will get the wing the way you want it.*

October 2021

Black Squirrel G.P. (General Practitioner)

Dean Wellman, BRSC Financial Secretary – Brule, WI



This is one of my must-have flies for Brule steelhead. It's a great fly for chromies "on the swing." We like to fish it on a 9-foot 7-weight with an Orvis mini sink tip. The Orvis sink tip isn't made anymore, but Jim Teeny has one that is essentially the same. The mini tip performs exceptionally well when swinging flies for hot fish in faster, broken water.

This fly is a modified Black Marabou Practitioner pattern from Trey Combs book *Steelhead Fly Fishing*. There, he describes the fly as "one of the finest all season dressings in Steelheading."

I want to thank Rick Khalar for graciously providing the black squirrel tail to me years ago. We met at Twin Gables and somehow the conversation got around to this fly. Just the other day, we met again by chance at a local pub and I mentioned that I had the fly in my vise using the squirrel tail he gave me.

Recipe

1. *Hook: Daiichi 2050 Alec Jackson – size 03 or 05. A fair substitute is a Tiemco TMC 200R in size 4. I like the turned up eye on the Alec Jackson. The size 03 is a little bigger than the size 4 Tiemco and the 05 is a little smaller.*
2. *Thread: Black size 3/0. Start at the hook eye and wrap rearward to above the hook point.*
3. *Tail: Tie in a small clump of black squirrel tail about 1 inch long. Next tie golden pheasant dyed hot orange to each side of the squirrel tail. The pheasant feather is tied in short so the second black bar is about 1/8th of an inch exposed.*
4. *Rib: Tie in a 4- or 5-inch piece of medium silver wire. This will be used as rib for flash and also to secure the black saddle hackle added in step 7.*
5. *Body: Dub the body half way to the hook eye. I like Kaufman's Black Stimulator dubbing.*
6. *First wing: Clump of black squirrel tail tied in at the halfway point and extending it to just short of the tail.*
7. *Finish dubbing the body to about 3/16th of an inch short of the hook eye.*
8. *Tie in a webby black saddle hackle by the butt end. It should be slightly larger than the hook gap at the front of the body (slightly smaller than the hook gap at the rear of the body). Palmer the hackle in evenly spaced wraps back to the end of the body, working the hackle past the first wing. Then, hold the hackle firmly and wrap the silver wire in evenly spaced wraps through the hackle to the hook eye. Snip off the excess hackle and tie off the wire. Trim some of the hackle fibers out of the center on top of the body from the hook eye to the first wing. I do this so that the second wing sits a little flatter.*
9. *Finish the fly by tying in a slightly larger clump of black squirrel tail on top of the fly behind the hook eye. This should extend to the length of the first wing. Tie off, whip finish and cement the head to help secure the squirrel tail.*

Try not to over dress the fly, leaner is meaner!