

Fly of the Month:

January- The Skip Nymph

Hook: Straight Shank heavy wire hook, sizes 20 to 8 (dai riki 075)

Thread: Brown 8/0

Ribbing: small copper wire

Back, Tail and Wingcase: Pheasant-tail fibers

Abdomen: Hare's mask (softer hair)

Thorax: Hare's mask (soft w/ stiffer hair mixed in)

~ Winter is upon us and has been for some time now. During these long nights most of us (including myself) have our dreams pointed toward the mighty steelhead. But alas, for some, these dreams are soon subdued after a few bone-chilling, no fish days (including myself). But I'm okay with that, because I know there is a different game in town. Trout.

Many people are under the impression that there is a "season" for fly fishing for trout. I am constantly hearing and reading "I can't wait for fishing season to start", or something along that order. Some of the best days I've had fly fishing for trout on our local waters have been in the middle of January and February. What, do they think that fish don't eat for a quarter of the year?

Now I admit, you're not going to go pick up a bunch of fish on your 3wt fishing dries, and begrudgingly I say that yes, the fishing is more difficult. But like everything else, with a little practice and patience, your favorite summer time trout waters will reveal their wintery secrets.

No dries? No 3wt? Then what do you use? Now there are whole books written on this topic so won't go into details, and since this IS a fly of the month article I should probably start talking about a fly. But, generally nymphing is the tactic of choice, and a 5wt, plenty of warm clothes and coffee are necessary gear to bring along. Now on to the fly pattern!

Skip Morris will be tying flies for us this January meeting, so I thought one of his flies would be fitting.

The Skip Nymph is a very effecting fly used in all kinds of situations fishing for trout. This nymph pattern first appeared in Fly Tying Made Clear and Simple, by Skip Morris, and was developed in the late 80's. Here are a couple of tips when tying this fly.

The Skip Nymph isn't very hard to tie, but if you don't know the trick to a nice wingcase, it could be a hassle. While holding the pheasant tail fibers where you want them, place your index finger (opposite hand) on top of the material to hold it in place. Now make a 2 loose wraps and slowly tighten them. Before you make any more wraps adjust the fibers if they moved and then make a few tighter wraps.

Another thing I have learned is that using a different mixture of hare's mask on the abdomen and thorax, really makes a big difference in how the fly turns out. I use more guard hair in the thorax. I also put a couple wraps of lead under the thorax since getting down to the bottom is a must when fishing wintertime trout.

Now put down that 8wt, pick up the 5wt and catch some fish!



Tied by & photo by Ryan Haseman