

Fly of the Month:

March 2011

Marabou Plus Damsel

Hook: Daiichi 1260 size 12

Tail: Olive Marabou

Abdomen: Olive Marabou

Thorax: Olive Marabou

Wing pad: Natural Pheasant tail

Legs: Natural Partridge

Eyes: 1/16" plastic bead chain

~ As the doldrums of winter start to lift, for some of us, our minds start to wonder if the fish in our favorite lakes are starting to get as antsy as we are. With average temperatures on the rise, many aquatic insects follow suit, preparing for their spring migration to adulthood. Never missing an opportunity, our fishy friends take full advantage.

In most northwest lakes, a main staple for these fish are damselfly nymphs. A slender, almost elegant predator of the insect realm, damselfly nymphs start to become active as the lake ices off. Sometime in spring they will migrate to the shores and hatch into their adult form. These damselfly migrations can make for a spectacular day on the water for a fly fisherman.

There are many patterns for damselfly nymphs, and most of them use an olive marabou for most of the fly. I am surprised though of the bulk of many of these patterns. A damsel fly is a very slender insect, opposite of its close relative, the dragonfly, which is almost football shaped. To get the right profile this is what I have done.

This fly is mostly made up of olive marabou. I added some legs, wing pads and eyes in a standard fashion to finish the fly off. Let me explain the marabou application.

First, it is important to pick the correct marabou. You will need marabou with long barbs, and orderly barbules. Most "bugger marabou" is insufficient. Try and find blood quill marabou. Most people use

this for marabou spiders for winter steelhead patterns.

What you want to do is grab about 6 or so barbs and strip them off of the stem. Tie in the ends to make the tail about half the length of the body. Now you will wrap the marabou up the shank of the hook (kind of like palmering hackle). End your wraps about 2/3 up the shank. After tying in your wing case, dub some marabou onto the thread and make up the thorax of the nymph. Be careful not to overdo it here. Now you can tie in your eyes and create your partridge legs. Dub a little more marabou to your thread and cover the area between the eyes and then finish the fly with a whip finish knot.

Fish your nymph with a sinking or intermediate line with very short strips, pausing regularly. Enjoy!



Ties & photo by Ryan Haseman