

## FLY OF THE MONTH – *Traditional Soft Hackles*



I like the traditional soft hackles and I enjoy tying them. These insect imitations are the oldest fly patterns known going way back in English fishing history. The key to tying these flies is to keep them sparsely tied. A problem many tiers encounter is sizing the hackle. Unlike traditional dry flies, the hackle on soft hackles are slightly longer than the hook shank. Also the tying materials are special to the traditional soft hackle. The hackle is partridge preferably taken from a partridge skin. Packaged feathers are not recommended. Some traditional patterns will require starling feathers. For the body material we recommend Pearsall's Gossamer Silk.

### Recipe

Hook: Mustad 94840, Dai-Riki 300 or Tiemco 100, and Tiemco 9300, sizes #10 - #18

Body: Two layers of working silk thread or floss, yellow, green, orange or red, depending on the fly pattern. Peacock and hare's ear are other body materials

Thorax: Hare's Ear Plus #7 or standard Hare's Ear #4 depending on the pattern

Hackle: Gray or brown Partridge depending on the pattern

### Tying Instructions:

1. Crush down the hook barb and place on the hook vise.
2. Select a partridge hackle slightly longer than the hook shank. Peel away the fuzz at the bottom and before tying the hackle on the hook shank run your thumbnail down the stem about 1/4 inch from the tie-in point. This makes the hackle easier to wrap.
3. Hold the hackle with the concave side toward you and strip off the feather fibers on the top half of the stem. This provides the sparse hackle wrap.
4. Tie-in the hackle stem on top of the hook shank with the concave side toward you and wrap rearward to the hook point and trim the hackle stem. continue to wrap just beyond the trimmed stem.
5. Reverse wrap back up to behind the hook eye. Be sure you butt each wrap tightly to the wrap before it.
6. Wax about an inch of the tying silk and take a pinch of the thorax dubbing and dub the silk twisting the dubbing tightly at the top and bottom but leave the center loosely dubbed.
7. Take 3-5 turns of dubbing just behind the hackle tie in point.
8. Using rubber tipped hackle pliers and holding them 90 degrees to the hook shank take 2 turns of hackle the second behind the first. The hackle fibers should stand at 90 degrees of the hook shank with a gentle curve to the back of the hook.
9. While holding the hackle with the hackle pliers take 3 wraps through the hackle rewards securing the wraps to the stem.
10. Wrap forward through the wraps to behind the hook eye being careful not to trap any hackle fibers. Whip finish with a small neat head, trim and cement.

### Recipe: Partridge and Yellow

Hook: Size #10 - #18

Thread: Yellow Pearsall's Gossamer silk

Thorax: Hare's Ear

Hackle: Gray partridge

## GO FISHING !

The Fly of the Month is provided by Bob Foster. Bob can be contacted at [bpfooster2@att.net](mailto:bpfooster2@att.net)

