

1252 Ellis Hollow Road
Ithaca, NY 14850
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Dear Datus,

I reread A Modern Dry-Fly Code a while back and got to thinking about the two factors that cause a trout to rise to a floating dun. First, there is the impressions the dun's legs make in the meniscus. This is often enough to entice the trout to rise and take the dun. Second, there is the appearance of the dun's wings at the edge of the trout's window of vision. This will assure the more cautious trout that the insect is the real thing.

Marinaro's Thorax Dun provides both of these factors, but can be difficult to tie. I got to thinking that there must be an easier way. How could I tie a fly that had only legs and wings? Using bunched, divided wings or a single wing would be simple enough and a wound hackle would provide the impression of legs on the water's surface. The problem was - what would hold up the back end of the hook? Your Invisible Hackle Fly came to mind ... maybe the bend of the hook could just hang below the surface!

Walton suggests that fish don't pay attention to the hook. Certainly, fish must ignore the hook most of the time or think of it as an insignificant part of an insect, otherwise few flies would work. Is it possible that the trout's brain works like a simple machine? The trout sees the impressions of the fly's legs on the water's surface, a switch is turned on and the trout rises and takes the fly. In more difficult circumstances a second switch is needed and that is turned on when the trout sees the fly's wings at the edge of its window of vision. Could it be that trout are not turned off by negative factors (assuming a perfectly presented fly), but are simply not turned on because the necessary triggers are not tripped?

The enclosed fly is designed to meet these two factors as simply as possible. Unlike other flies that are tied to hang in the surface, this one has it's hackles tied down to specifically imitate the impressions a floating dun's legs make in the meniscus. Unfortunately, I haven't had a chance to try this design out, but I thought you might enjoy playing around with it.

Sincerely yours,

Ed Thomas



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