

The Fly Tyer's Corner Recipe by Jeff Hoelter

Pheasant Tail Soft Hackle Nymph

The Pheasant Tail Soft Hackle Nymph is a variation on one of the most popular and effective nymphs around. The original Pheasant Tail Nymph was tied by Frank Sawyer to imitate a mayfly. Al Troth further developed the pattern by adding the peacock herl thorax which has become the standard. If you tie the pattern without a tail, it becomes an effective caddis fly imitation too. Substituting glass beads or metal beads for the thorax increases this fly's versatility even more. And don't as-

sume this fly is only for trout. It makes a great dropper off the back of a hopper or popper for any of our hill country streams.

Materials

Hook: TMC 3761 or Mustad 3906B size 10 to 26

Thread: Brown

Ribbing: Fine copper wire

Abdomen: Pheasant tail barbs

Thorax: Peacock Herl (or glass or metal bead)

Hackle: Partridge

Step 1: Prepare the Partridge hackle by removing the fluff at the bottom of the stem down to the barb size you want to use (should be about the length of the hook shank). Then remove 2 or 3 barbs from the bottom right hand side as you view the feather from the outside. (see photo). This will make it easier to align when you start to wrap it around the hook.



Step 2: Start the thread just behind the eye and tie the hackle stem on the top of the hook behind the eye with the inside of the feather (concave side) facing up. Leave room on the hook to wrap the hackle and make a nice head.



Step 3: Tie in a few inches of copper wire and about 6-8 barbs from the Pheasant tail and wrap back to the bend of the hook and then forward to thorax.



Step 4: Wrap the Pheasant Tail barbs forward and tie off. Then counter wrap the copper wire over the abdomen with 4 or 5 wraps for the rib.



Step 5: Tie in 3 or 4 peacock herls for the thorax and wrap them forward to the hackle.



Steps 6: Fold the hackle stem back so it is perpendicular to the hook shank and then make 2 wraps and tie it off. Remove any excess hackle. Tidy up the head and add head cement.

