

Osprey Flybox

“Tying a Durable Dazzle Leech”

By Doug Wright

One of the most popular leech patterns and my personal favorite is Phil Rowley’s Dazzle Leech. There are many other leech patterns that use the same tying concept – dubbing a body and teasing out the fibers with Velcro or a bodkin – but I stick to calling them all the Dazzle Leech. I probably fish this pattern eighty percent of the time when fishing leeches and it has proven itself on countless occasions. It flows nicely through the water and has just the right amount of flash if you use the right materials. It is a very effective fly pattern but for me, it was not durable enough. Leech-type patterns draw the most hard, aggressive strikes from trout and the Dazzle Leech is certainly no exception, but it would start to fall apart and become too sparse or ‘naked’ looking.

Eventually I came up with a method that would make a more durable Dazzle Leech. I made a thread dubbing loop, inserted the dubbing and twisted as done usually, but I then twisted the loop with a fine copper wire loop to form a dubbing brush. The dubbing brush is wound forward to form the body and the dubbing is picked out with a teaser or Velcro. Tying the Dazzle Leech this way made the pattern much more durable and it rarely falls apart on me. When the dubbing is teased, the wire shines through the dubbing giving it highlights of another colour as well! You can exclude the step of making the thread dubbing loop and just insert the dubbing into the wire loop, but I always use the thread dubbing loop first. It does a better job of securing the dubbing as wire is to slick and smooth, making it difficult to insert and hold shorter fiber dubbing. If you have a dubbing brush maker, such as the Root’s Dubbing Machine, please do use it as it will be much faster to complete a dubbing brush. But for those of you without a dubbing machine, this is how I make a dubbing brush and tie the Dazzle Leech.

Hook:	3 extra long, straight nymph/streamer hook, such as Mustad 9672
Thread:	Gudebrod 6/0, colour to match
Rib:	Fine copper wire or colour to match
Tail:	Pheasant tail
Body:	Angler’s Choice Mohair Plus, Dazzle Dubbing, or Arizona Semi Seal
Head:	(Metal bead (optional))

De-barb the hook, start your tying thread and wrap shank. Add weight or a metal bead if needed. Take either a clump of marabou or dubbing used for the body, and tie in for the tail. It should extend to be at least shank length to provide necessary movement. Do not use too much material or the undulating movement will be greatly decreased. Tie in a long section of fine copper wire and bind it down to the rear of the shank where the tail is tied in. Here, make a generous size dubbing loop with your thread. Advance your tying thread forward to the front of the fly.



Insert your dubbing into the thread dubbing loop. The best choices of dubbing for this fly pattern include both Mohair Plus and Dazzle Dubbing by Angler's Choice, and Arizona Semi Seal. Using a dubbing whirl or any dubbing tool, twist the loop until the dubbing is snug and secure.

Take the piece of fine copper wire, wrap it around the hooks of your dubbing whirl and bring it back to the starting point to make a wire loop that is now the exact same size as the twisted thread loop. Secure and break off the excess wire.

Twist the thread dubbing loop with the wire loop tightly to form the dubbing brush. Don't overdo it or the brush will break where it is tied in.

Wind the dubbing brush forward to create the body and trim the remains. Whip-finish and take a Velcro comb or bodkin and tease out the dubbing to form a scruffy body.

With the dubbing picked out, remove the fly and place in a cup of boiling or hot water for thirty seconds to a few minutes. This removes the kinks and coils in the dubbing, allowing it to "swim" much nicer through the water. Apply head cement to the thread.

Tie this pattern in a variety of colours for greater flexibility when on the water. Try using this technique, utilizing a fine wire loop, on other patterns that require the use of dubbing.



If you have a pattern you'd like to share with club members, let me know and we'll put it in a future issue. Call Doug at 604-930-1112 or email me at dougwright@telus.net