

The Osprey Flybox

“Dirty Lady”

by Will Wright

The Osprey Flybox returns this month after a rather lengthy hiatus. Some of you know I finally broke down and bought myself an Olympus C-5060 digital camera so I won't have to borrow the old Sony Mavica from work anymore. The Olympus is a 5 mega pixel camera which got great reviews in many tests and of particular note for me, it takes great macro photos. This is the first time I've rally tried shooting any flies since I got it and I've been experimenting with new background colours, I hope you find the results favourable.

The Flybox will only continue for as long as I can keep getting submissions from our members and guests, hopefully someone will supply a proven coho pattern for the November's newsletter. I took over this part of the newsletter in April 2000 and ran out of ideas around Sept of 2003. Not being as innovative or creative a fly tier as my predecessor Phil Rowley, I'll be depending on input from others to keep things going. Hopefully we can put a few months together.

Right now I'm getting things ready for this year's trip to the Bulkley and one of the flies I'm tying in preparation is the Dirty Lady, a pattern my friend Steve Chantler introduced me to a few years ago. Last year I did well with this fly on the first day of the trip and definitely started the trip off on a high note by hooking into three fish in one run, managing to get 2 of them to the beach. I hooked the first one and Frank DiGiovanni came up the beach to help me land it (thanks Frank), a nice little doe of about 25 inches. Frank took a 'hero shot' picture, I released the fish and Frank headed back downstream to resume fishing his part of the run. I waded out and just sort of tossed my spey line into the river and made a really bad cast with the line piling up at the end as most of my spey casts do. There was a boulder there and I thought my line was wrapped around it so I lifted up on the 15 foot rod and low and behold the line takes off downstream, I was quite excited and called Frank back to lend me a hand again.

Together we got that fish to the beach, pictures were taken this time of the 31 inch buck and Frank again made his way back down to where he'd left his rod. I got about 20 steps further down the run and hooked another steelhead, I yelled to Frank, "You're not gonna believe this!" I was ecstatic, I figured this fly was the key to such great success on our first run, on our first day, it had to be, three fish in less than 30 minutes.. Gotta be the fly, right?

I ended up losing that third fish and wouldn't touch another one for 2 days, but man that first run was a hoot! There's been a definite pattern develop with Dan Cahill, Frank and I the last 3 years on the river, while my fishing partners catch fish more consistently over the trip, I seem to go days without a bump then have the odd day I'll hit numerous fish, so by the end of the trip we're all pretty even. We've now all got flies we have confidence in and last year I stuck with the Dirty Lady pretty much the whole 2 weeks and can speak for the fly's effectiveness.

I first met Steve Chantler by going to the Fish BC tying nights and we've fished together a few times the last couple years. At one of the tying nights in another member's basement 4 few years ago I mentioned we'd soon be going on our first trip to the Bulkley and Steve quickly tied me up a pattern he calls the Dirty Lady. He told me to try it and said he'd had great luck with it the previous year. Steve's a good guy, the "shirt off his back" sorta person and last year he stopped by my house a few days before we headed north and just gave me about a dozen flies, some ladies and some nicely tied GP's, he wouldn't let me give him anything for them, pretty good huh? One of those flies was the one I had all the fun with that first day last year, the fly which continued to give good results the whole trip. Steve says the fly is dark and flashy, a little bit of a "dirty lady" and this is what he dubbed his creation. The fly shown below is all black but Steve likes to tie them in purple and Orange as well and prefers then in sizes 2 to 2/0.

I couldn't find any purple buck tail so tied some using dyed squirrel tail and really like how they turned out. The squirrel tail has dark tips so it takes the dye a little different and the finished fly looks pretty cool, I'm anxious to try it this year. The hair is quite a bit softer than the buck tail too and should give more movement in the water especially when combined with the attraction qualities of the crystal flash.

I've also experimented by tying in the hackle at the front by the base, wrapping it to the rear of the hook and holding it in place by using a gold wire rib counter wound over it making the fly a little more durable. I've heard the fly referred to as a poor man's General Practitioner, a woolly bugger with a wing but no matter; all I know is it's a fly that's easy to tie and catches fish! Thanks for showing it to me Steve!

TYING INSTRUCTIONS

Materials	
Hook:	Mustad 36890 sizes 2 to 2/0
Tail	Mix of black buck tail and UV Pearl Krystal Flash
Hackle:	Black schlappen for bigger sizes, black hen for smaller ones
Body	Black Crystal Chenille
Under Wing:	UV Pearl Krystal Flash
Over Wing:	Black buck tail

Step 1

Start the thread at the eye and build a base layer of thread to the rear of the hook. Tie in a rather long but not heave bunch of buck tail and top it off with about 8 strands of Pearl UV Krystal Flash. Steve prefers to mix the Krystal Flash and buck tail together first and tie them both in at once.



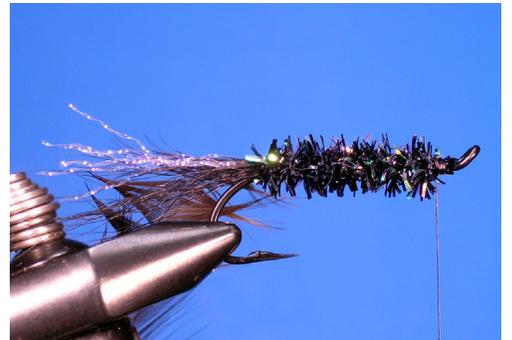
Step 2

Prepare a wet hackle (shlappen for big sizes, hen for smaller like the size 2 shown) by stroking a few fibres back near the tip and tie in wet style, curve down at the bend of the hook.



Step 3

Tie in the crystal chenille at the rear of the hook and wrap up to the eye and trim.



Step 4

Palmer the hackle to the front and tie off. Trim the fibres off the top so the wing will lay flatter over the top.



Step 5

Tie in 8-10 strands of Krystal Flash extending about $\frac{3}{4}$ onto the tail.



Step 7

Top off with a sparse clump of buck tail, you don't want a big heavy wing. Once tied in move the thread back onto the wing about $\frac{1}{8}$ " and give it 2 loose wraps to hold the hair down, doing so will prevent it from flaring and help to keep the wing low over the back. Whip finish and coat the head with Sally Hansen nail polish or brushable Loctite and you're done.

