

OSPREY FLY BOX

“EGG & SKIN” FLY

contributed by

Warren Grisewood

I don't fish much anymore, especially winter steelhead. But when I used to fish in the winter it was for steelhead and usually with Rick Jones. He developed a fly that caught fish and was easy to tie.

The “Egg & Skin” Fly was originally featured in the Osprey News in January 1974, a half dozen years after Rick originated the pattern. Rick's discussion of how and why he developed this pattern was as follows

“No doubt fly fishermen have been using similar patterns for years but my version of this fly was born around Christmas of 1968.

I had fished the Vedder River for years with only moderate success. I read every book on flyfishing for steelhead that I could find. They were all similar in that they spoke of the warm waters of Oregon and California or summer run fish.

The methods in these books failed miserably on the Vedder River. I fished through runs for hours only to find that float fishermen could pick up steelhead in the water that I had just covered. I thought about this frustrating situation a lot and came up with three conclusions:

1. *I wasn't fishing deep enough.*
2. *My fly wasn't going slow enough.*



Warren Grisewood on the Bulkley River in October 1971.

3. *The fly pattern was not exciting enough to prompt a strike.*

If fly fishing the Vedder is to be a success, all of these problems must be dealt with. The first problem I hoped to solve was the best fly pattern. I researched volumes of books for a suitable pattern but could not find what I was looking for: I asked all the float fishermen what they considered the most deadly lure. The answers were all the same “Roe”.

The best imitation I was able to come up with is a pattern I called the “Egg & Skin” fly. It is a very simple fly to tie and a dozen can be whipped up in a matter of minutes.

*The Egg & Skin fly has produced very well on all types of migratory fish whether they be salmon, cutthroat or steelhead. It is not a pretty pattern but it is simple and will take fish – **Guaranteed.**”*

Although it was not a great looking fly it caught fish. We would fish it as deep and as slow, swinging across the bottom as slowly as possible.

A little more innovative than the float fisherman's “wool on a hook”, it's supposed to look like roe bouncing on the bottom.

The takes are subtle and soft.

MATERIALS



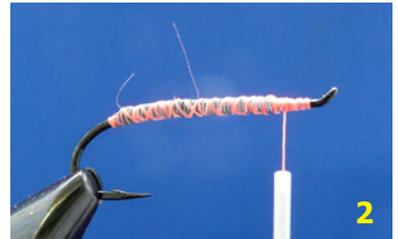
- Hook:** Mustad Salmon Hook 36890
Size 2 - 4
- Thread:** Orange 6/0 *(to suit colour of wool)*
- Underbody:** Lead Wire
- Body:** Candy Apple Edge Bright
- Collar:** Phentex Yarn or Steelhead Wool
Red, Orange, or Pink ... and
White

TYING INSTRUCTIONS

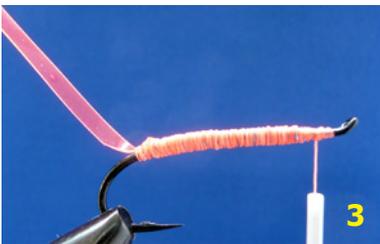
Photography by Peter Chatt



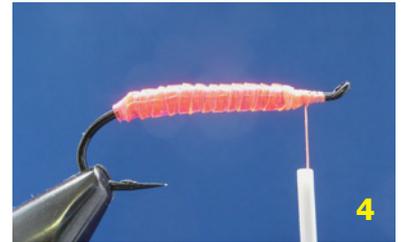
- Debarb the hook.



- Wrap lead over a thread base then cover with thread.



- Cut a angle on the Edge-bright and attach to the butt, then cover the lead with thread.



- Wrap the Edge-bright forward overlapping each wrap.



- Attach Phentex or Steelhead Wool (*red, orange or pink*) on two quadrants ... top & bottom or side & side.



- Attach white Phentex or Steelhead Wool in the remaining two quadrants.

The Finished Fly



"Egg & Skin" Fly

- Brush out to look like a egg in a sac.

Unweighted Version:

- Omit lead wire in Step 2.
- Tie a contrasting colour of thread on head to indicate the fly is tied different to the original pattern.

The Finished Fly



Unweighted "Egg & Skin"

TYER'S NOTE: This identification system can be used on smaller flies (*Nymphs, for example*) when small changes to the design of the fly have been made.