OSPREY FLY BOX
Lingren's Indispensible
contributed by
Ken Baker

Since retiring on of the things I have been able to do is spend some time on the Bulkley River angling for summer run steelhead. My success ratio in not the best, but it is a thrill to catch one of these fish especially on a dry fly.

I started out the first few times I went fishing both a Skagit line and a dry line. Gradually the Skagit and intruders fell out of favour and although I do use tips occasionally I prefer to stick to a dry line. Skating dries and fishing "damp" is now my preferred method for fishing this system.

Last year was a disaster for me, warm low water, hot weather, and very few fish, ended up with me being skunked. I went up in early September and went home early due to poor conditions. I returned again in early October and that fishless trip was cut short as my darling fell down the basement stairs and broke her arm in three places. Some people will do anything to get out of cooking for three months.

With all year to look forward to this fall's expedition I spent a little time licking my wounds and contemplating what to tie for this year. I tied a few flies that I hoped would produce and looked over what I had from previous years. I had fished this fly last year but along with everything else, as mentioned before, failed to bring any fish up.

As usual this year was going to be different. Nobody has ever said fishermen are not optimists when they start out on a trip.

I arrived mid-September planning on staying till Thanksgiving weekend. I was told fish were in and willing, but the river was very low and clear. I was very optimistic that this should make for some dry fly fishing. After several days of trying dries and alternating with sub surface presentations it was apparent, for me any ways, that they were not interested in my dries but I did take some fish on Art Lingren's Indispensable. Five out of the eight fish I caught were taken on the red hook version of this fly swung on a dry line. More would have been nice but you have to take what you get.

Although the fly as shown is tied on a black hook, I tie this fly both on red and black hooks.

Hook: 10 to 1/0 Salmon Mustad, Partridge, Tiemco, or Gamakatsu T-10-6H (Red) your choice.

Thread: Black 6/0

Tail: Art specifies black Squirrel but I prefer Black Bear. A few strands of Black, Red or Pearl Krystal flash may also be added. I have also used Pearl Flashabou.

Rib: Silver oval tinsel

Body/Throat Hackle: Black palmered, stripped one side

Body: Black mohair. I like seal fur myself

Wing: 2 Black dyed Golden Pheasant body feathers tied low over body

I'm sure Art will forgive me for taking a few liberties with his dressing. Some were a result of substitutions because either I did not have what was called for on hand, or because of personal preference for the substituted material. While I was away this year I ended up tying the wing with Black dyed pheasant rump as I forgot my Golden Pheasant feathers. The two fly shops in Smithers did not have any Golden Pheasant skins of any colour and the pheasant rump was as close as I could come. I guess you could also tie a hair wing version using black squirrel or black bear. Whenever possible I prefer to use natural fur/feathers over dyed materials as the colour of natural materials varies in intensity of shades.

Tying Instructions:

- Place de-barbed hook in vice and lay down a thread base.
- Tie in tail and add flash material if desired.
- Tie in body hackle and tinsel.
- Dub/wrap body and tie off. I use a dubbing loop with seal fur.
- Bring tinsel forward tie off, then follow tinsel with body hackle and make a few turns for the throat.
- Tie off and sweep hackle down trimming stray bits if necessary.
- Strip the butt of the wing feathers and slide through eye to align. Make a few tight wraps and clip in front of thread.
- Build a small thread head.
- Whip finish, add a little head cement and you're done.

Photography by Peter Chatt

I have also tied this fly in purple. The purple version took one fish this year.

Tight lines.