

The Osprey Fly Box

by Will Wright

“Orange Pupa”

Last summer, while visiting the Newcastle area of northeast England, **Alex Carr** picked up the April 2000 issue of a popular fly-fishing magazine “Fly Fishing and Fly Tying”. In it was an article entitled “Hunting Duck” by a well-known and respected Irish fisherman named Basil Shields. Basil “says that duckfly represent the best fishing of the year on many of the Irish loughs, especially his own Lough Corrib”, the shores of which Basil’s home is located. The article explains the peculiar name, “when they are hatching en mass, ducks will paddle around plucking off the chironomid pupae at the surface. Hatches are so heavy that ducks can enjoy a good feed of theses protein-rich insects and they are not the only wild creatures to benefit... brown trout love them.”

The article shows seven of the author’s favorite duckfly patterns, but the one that interests Alex the most was the Orange Pupa originally tied by Paddy Gargan. If you’ve ever heard of or fished the old ‘carrot nymph’, you’re no doubt aware of how the orange floss changes colour when it gets wet. That’s the case with the Pearsall’s hot orange marabou floss called for in this pattern as well. “When the duckfly hatch there’s this lovely burst of fiery brown colour within the pupa and this floss silk imitates it beautifully and the fish go crackers for it!”

The jungle cock is tied in underneath the fly because trout will always see flies like this from below. Basil prefers to tie in a single jungle cock feather split down the middle and tied in at the throat of the fly, as the thread is tightened the feather splays into a fork shape. The other option is to tie it in on the sides as shown here, or omit it altogether.

Hook: Kumansan B70, size 12 (Mustad R-50 shown)
Thread: Orange
Butt: Silver tinsel
Body: Pearsall’s hot orange floss
Rib: Stripped peacock herl
Thorax: Bronze peacock herl
Breathers: Jungle cock eyes tied under body (optional)
Hackle: Soft badger or grizzly hen



Tied by Phil Rowley.

Alex feels the fly would do well drifted on a dry line during a chironomid hatch. He’s tying some for the upcoming season and suggests you do the same, try it out and asks that you let him know how it works for you. He wishes you all good luck for 2001, and hopes this fly works well for you.