

CrackleBack

Origin:

Without question, the CRACKLEBACK is the most popular fly from my personally developed collection of trout fly patterns. I have been tying the pattern since the late 1950's. It's a take-off from a popular wet-woolly of the time, tied with a chenille body and a natural raffia pulled over the back, full length of the hook-shank. In the early 1960's I named the fly after a bass plug made by Bill Walters of Jasonville, Ind. It too had a pale olive body with a crinkly-green back."

Ed Story...Feather-Craft Corp.

Original Materials:

Hook: Mustad 94840 (size #10 - original) or TMC 5210
Thread: Danville 6/0 prewaxed, color #100 black
Hackle: India Furnace saddle hackle, or Furnace neck hackle for the small sizes
Crackle Back: Two strands of Peacock Herl
Body: SPECTRUM #20 pale olive
[Note: Now tied with various shades of yellow-olive dubbing or goose quill]



Original Tying Instructions:

1. Tie the thread in and run it to the end of the hook-shank.
2. Select a long narrow India "furnace saddle hackle. Size and prepare it, then tie it in at the end of the end (sic) of the hook-shank, dull-side facing you.
3. Tie in 2-strands of peacock herl at the end of the hook-shank...and tie them in so they are on-top of the end of the hook-shank.
4. The thread is still at the end of the hook shank and we are now going to dub with SPECTRUM. You will see that SPECTRUM is a continuous synthetic, very soft fiber. Other body materials can be used with the latest being turkey quill.
5. Tease off from the hank a sparse continuous piece (strand). You now should have a sparse strand of SPECTRUM a little over two inches long.
6. Lay the SPECTRUM piece under the thread close to the hook-shank and with moistened fingers roll the end close to the hook shank onto the thread. Roll it in one direction only. The balance of the strand is hanging loose.
7. Where it's now rolled on the thread.. push it up to the hook shank, and using your bobbin, make two thread wraps around the hook shank.. locking the SPECTRUM to the end of the hook-shank.
8. With your E-Z MINI Hackle PLIER, grab the other end of the SPECTRUM-STRAND and the thread AT THE SAME TIME. Firmly hold the bobbin out to your chest, making a shaft of the thread.
9. Spin the E-Z MINI-HACKLE PLIER COUNTER-CLOCKWISE (like a propeller) around the thread. Instantly you have a fly body spin-dubbed on the thread.
10. Now pinch the SPECTRUM and thread with your left hand fingers, while you remove the hackle-plier and shift the "pinched" thread and new fly body to your right (tying-hand).
11. Wrap the now dubbed fly body on the hook shank and up to just behind the hook-eye. Tye it in with a few thread wraps. Cut away waste.
12. Lay the two strands of peacock herl over the top of the fly body and tye in behind the hook eye. Do not pull the peacock strands to (sic) tight as we are going to wrap the hackle over them. Leave a tiny amount of slack in the herl.
13. Palmer-wrap the furnace saddle hackle forward in wide-wraps so plenty of fly body color shows thru the wraps. And notice because we used a furnace hackle, the fly body automatically has a black rib. Tye the hackle in just behind the hook-eye, finish the fly head and whip-finish.

Variations:

Club member Joseph Aimonette says that any Crackleback not tied using the original or similar materials and colors is not really a Crackleback. This look-a-like fly is really a dry woolly. Whether it is called a Crackleback or a dry woolly, a good variation of the Crackle back is tied with a green holographic body and a palmered grizzly hackle. It is tied similar to the Crackleback and fished in the same manner. Joe calls this variation the Green Ghost.

Fishing techniques:

Fishing the Fly - "...Dress the fly with silicone-gel and fished as a "dry" as intended. If the fly sinks in fast water, it's simply "skipped" under the surface with the rod tip. On the next cast, it'll float again. Frankly, this is the method used by most fly fishers. Fish it as a dry, if you don't get a hit jerk the fly under and skip it along with your rod tip."

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