

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

Kelly Galloup's Olive Zoo Cougar

Inspired by Kelly Galloup's presentation at our Annual All Day Meeting, I chose one of his long-time favorite streamers – the Zoo Cougar - for April's fly of the month. I tied and fished these in olive and yellow during our trip to Michigan last fall. Our guide, Mike, out of Bob Lindsenmann's Au Sable Angler Shop, rowed us down the lower Au Sable River while coaching us on the finer points of fishing these on full-sinking lines. Done right – in the manner described by Kelly at our meeting and in his videos - it can be deadly on rainbows and browns any time of the day and any time of the year. This is probably one of Galloup's easier flies to tie yet is a very good imitation of our river baitfish - especially our sculpin.

Hook: TMC5263 Size 4 or 6

Thread: 6/0 Brown and Brown G.S.P for spinning the collar and head

Tail: 2 Olive Marabou feathers

UnderBody: White Flat Waxed Floss

Body: Pearl Diamond Braid

Under Wing: White Calf Tail

Over Wing: Olive Dyed Mallard Flank

Collar and Head: Olive Deer Hair



- 1) Start thread about 1/3 of the shank behind the hook eye and wrap back to the bend of the hook.
- 2) Tie in first olive marabou feather in top of hook shank so that it is about as long as the hook shank and trim excess. Tie in the other marabou feather on top of the first so that they are the same length and tend to fan out vertically.
- 3) Tie in the Diamond braid and wrap the thread to the starting point and whip finish.
- 4) Start the white underbody at the beginning point and build up a slim but level underbody ending at the beginning point once again. (the white underbody will help the body remain pearly white like almost all minnows and sculpin)
- 5) Wrap the Diamond Braid body and tie off with the flat waxed floss at the beginning point - again about 1/3 of the way from the eye.
- 6) Clip a generous clump of white calf tail but do not stack. Grab the hair by the tips and pull out any short hairs. Trim the cut end so that the hair extends to about ¼ inch past the end of the body and tie in on top of hook.
- 7) Select 2 well-centered mallard flank feathers that will reach to almost the end of the tail and trim off anything fluffy. Tie in on top of under wing and whip finish the flat waxed floss. A few drops of cement or Zap-A-Gap is good here.
- 8) Start the brown G.S.P. at the end of the body where the collar will be.
- 9) Clip and stack a generous clump of olive deer hair. Trim to length and tie in on top of the hook. After drawing it down, it should cover the body and wing all around except on the bottom. Remember... the collar butts should not become part of the head.

10) Spin the deer hair head but do not pack too tightly- you still want it to sink. Whip finish and trim the head so that it is a flat oval that tapers front to back. Think about a sculpin head that is flat and tapers to those big pectoral fins.

The trick to tying this fly is staying compact and properly proportioned. The splayed tail and the flat parachute hackle make this fly float flat in the surface of the water. I like to use Water Shed permanent floatant to make them float all day without leaving an oil slick. Obviously 7X tippet is in order when fishing these tiny guys, and a light touch keeps you from separating you from your fly. Tied in size 18 or 20, these are beefy enough to suspend a BWO emerger from if you want to cover all your bases. I found it unnecessary.

Note: Obviously, the parachute process is much easier to demonstrate than it is to describe. We'll be doing these in the Member's class this winter.