

**Fly of the Month**

*By Mike Ott*

**Little Black X-Caddis**

If you were at the Bennett outing this month, you know the fish were very active on top. Depending on where you were and what time of day, it seemed like there were several different bugs active. Spending most of my time on the fly-only water, I was baffled by rising fish along the far bank (of course) that were taking bugs from the film refusing any surface-floating dry. One frequent Bennett fisherman finally cracked the code, and we discovered little black caddis flies were the bugs of choice and drowned dries were the fly of choice. This little black X-Caddis is a bit like a no-hackle elk hair caddis, but with a trailing shuck and a little different geometry.



- Hook: TMC100 Dry Fly Hook #16-18**
- Thread: 12/0 Black**
- Tail: A sparse hank of Black Antron**
- Body: Black Dry Fly Dubbing**
- Wing: Fine Black Elk Hair or Coastal Deer Hair**

- 1) Secure hook in vise and start thread about mid-hook shank and wrap to a point adjacent to hook point - a little farther forward than I usually start.
- 2) Separate a small amount of black antron and tie in as a "tail" and trim to about 1/2 the hook shank length.
- 3) Dub a finely tapered body about 3/4 the hook shank.
- 4) Stack a small amount of black elk hair or coastal deer hair. You will only be using the tips.
- 5) Secure on top of hook so that tips extend to about the bend of the hook. Lift the butt-end of the hair, make several thread wraps between the hair and the hook eye.
- 6) Whip finish the head and trim the elk hair butts to form a really tight head.

These were best fished with no extra floatant right in the film or just under the surface. I used a little white parachute about 18 inches above my X-Caddis as a strike indicator since this fly is almost invisible on the water at any significant distance. These little black caddis flies seem to be a regular winter hatch, but only get smaller as the winter drags on, so CDC may become a better wing material for anything smaller than a #20.