

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

Pink Squirrel Nymph a Driftless Favorite

While researching flies for a trip to Wisconsin's Driftless Area, I happened across a cult favorite – John Bethke's original Pink Squirrel nymph. Is it a hot-spot hare's ear? Maybe an egg-sucking scud? No one had a good answer but everyone carries and fishes them. The Driftless Angler fly shop in Viroqua, WI even has t-shirts, hats, and other fly shop swag bearing a pink squirrel logo. This simple fly fishes well and just plain catches fish regardless of what it is supposed to represent.



Hook: Standard Scud Hook - Dai-Riki #125 #12-16

Bead: Gold Tungsten

Thread: 8/0 Brown

Tail: Pearl Crystal Flash

Ribbing: Small Red UltraWire

Body: Red Fox Squirrel Back Hair or Hare's Ear Dubbing

Collar: Fine Fluorescent Pink Chenille

- 1) Place bead on hook and secure in vise. Start thread behind bead and advance to hook bend.
- 2) Tie in two strands of crystal flash as a tail. Trim to length – about the length of the body.
- 3) Tie in about three inches of wire ribbing.
- 4) Dub a rather full body tapering up to just behind the bead.
- 5) Brush or pick out the dubbing to make a shaggy body.
- 6) Rib with red wire, tie off behind bead, and trim excess.
- 7) Tie in chenille just behind the bead, make one full wrap of chenille to form a collar, tie off, and trim excess. Remember to pull the excess fibers out of the chenille threads to keep the fly neat.
- 8) Whip finish and trim thread.

Fish the Pink Squirrel as you would any nymph; Dead-drift under an indicator, use as an anchor fly in a European-style rig, or use to sight-fish without an indicator. Try tying them in other colors as well – olive, tan, brown, etc. Just have fun with your squirrel.