

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

X2-Caddis X-Caddis

These two caddis imitations are the product of Craig Matthews of Blue Ribbon Flies in West Yellowstone, MT. Designed to mimic emerging, drifting, and egg-laying caddis flies, they float well, present a realistic silhouette on the water, and are very easy to tie. Although caddis do not have tails, the Z-Lon "tail" actually imitates a trailing shuck or downed wings. Color is your preference as is the ribbing. I like tan, pale olive, and dark olive in sizes 14 – 18.



Hook: Standard Dry Fly hook size 14 - 18

Thread: 8/0 Brown

Tail: Tan or Brown Z-Lon

Optional Ribbing: 1 strand of Pearl Crystal Flash or Flashabou

Body: Dry Fly Dubbing of your choice

Wing: Elk Hair

Head: X-Caddis – Trimmed Elk Hair butts, X2-Caddis – Spikey Dubbing slightly darker color than body



- 1) Secure hook in vise. Start thread behind hook eye, and advance to hook bend.
- 2) Tie in a small bunch of Z-Lon to form the trailing shuck. Trim the excess leaving about a hook-shank length. Tie in the ribbing if you are using it.
- 3) Dub a rather full tapered body to about the $\frac{3}{4}$ point on the hook shank. Wrap the ribbing forward if you are using it and trim the excess.
- 4) Select a section of elk hair about the diameter of the body. Clean and stack the elk hair.
- 5) Tie in the wing just ahead of the body extending just to the end of the hook bend.
- 6) Either finish by trimming the butts at an angle for the X-Caddis or trim the butts very close for the X2-Caddis. If tying the X2, dub a spikey head covering the hair butts.
- 7) Whip-finish the head and trim the thread.

Designed to float flush on the water surface, I fish the X-Caddis as a typical dry fly. I also use it is the dry in a dry/dropper rig tying a caddis emerger or soft hackle under it. Don't be afraid to experiment with colors and materials. And don't make them too pretty – caddis are kind of lumpy, messy, and generally disheveled, but trout love them.