

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

Rusty CDC&Elk Caddis

On a recent trip to the Current River, I encountered blizzards of adult caddis flies buzzing and bouncing over the water on every riffle, every back water eddy, and along every bushy bank. Fish were sporadically rising but I could only get half-hearted interest in surface caddis imitations, soft hackles, and a myriad of other caddis patterns. Apparently the caddis had emerged earlier in the morning and these fish were taking the egg-laying adults or the spinners that were expiring prematurely. I took one of my almost too pretty elk hair caddis, trimmed off all the hackle, mashed down the wing a bit, and fished it flush in the film for almost continuous action on actively rising fish. That's when I sat down at the vise and concocted a surface-film-riding elk hair caddis. I'm sure I am ripping-off someone else's pattern, but here it is.



Hook: TMC100 size 16-20 or other standard Dry Fly Hook
Body: 6-8 Fibers of *Rusty Spinner* colored Turkey Rounds Wing Quill
Ribbing: Extra Fine Copper Wire
Under Wing: Natural Dun CDC Puff
Over Wing: Dark Tan/Light Brown Elk Hair (can use coastal deer hair on smaller sizes)
Collar: Tan Super Bright dubbing

- 1) Place hook in vise and start thread behind hook eye and wrap to bend of hook
- 2) Tie in X-Small copper wire and turkey round fibers by the tips
- 3) Wrap turkey round fibers to cover hook shank forming a tapered body end tying it off about three eye-lengths from the eye and trim – leave room for wings and collar
- 4) Reverse wrap the ribbing and tie off and trim
- 5) Tie in CDC puff so that it forms a wing that extends to the hook bend
- 6) Cut and stack the elk hair to even the ends and tie in over CDC extending just past the end of the CDC and hook bend. Lift the ends and make several thread wraps on hook shank to help flair the elk hair butts. Trim off leaving the ends like an elk caddis.
- 7) Loosely dub a small amount of Super Bright dubbing behind the elk hair butts and pick out.
- 8) Move thread back to hook eye in front of elk hair butts and whip finish.

I fish this fly dead-drift right in the film where I see fish working the surface. I have also fished it as an emerger by letting it swing downstream in the current, but it is pretty buoyant for that. Also try olive, dark brown, and black in smaller sizes.