

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

Chickabou Stone Nymph

It seems that every year there is a new material or new application for an old material. Chickabou has been around for a while now, but it has started to show up more now that there is a real shortage of traditional chicken feathers. Also packaged as Bird Fur, this material is versatile and has carved out its own niche in the fly tying community. While it is marabou-ish, it is somewhat finer and straighter yet still offers the same action in the water. I spotted this pattern in Skip Morris' " Trout Flies for Rivers" and thought it would be a good one for Missouri streams.



Hook: Heavy Wire 3XL Nymph Hook size 8-14 (I like size 10 and 12)

Thread: Brown 6/0 or 3/0

Weight: Lead wire wraps under the thorax

Tail: Barred Brown Chickabou

Abdomen: One or Two Barred Brown Chickabou feathers

Rib: Brassy Gold or Copper Wire

Wing case: Section of Turkey Wing Quill

Legs: Dyed Brown Soft Grizzly Hackle

Thorax: One Barred Brown Chickabou Feather

1. Secure hook in vise. Add 10-12 wraps of lead wire at the thorax. Start thread behind the hook eye, and secure the lead wire in place.
2. Advance thread back to the hook bend and tie in a fluffy tail of Chickabout tips. Wrap the shafts of the feather down to about the thorax to form an underbody.
3. Tie ribbing wire and one fairly large Chickabou feather by the tips.
4. Wrap the Chickabou feather to the thorax to form the body and tie off.
5. Counter-wrap the ribbing wire and tie off at the thorax. Neatly trim any excess material.
6. Select a section of turkey quill wide enough to cover the thorax and tie in by the tip extending back toward the tail.
7. Tie in the soft webby barred brown grizzly hackle by the tip, then another Chickabou feather by the tips.
8. Wrap a thorax of Chickabou and secure at the head. Trim any excess.
9. Palmer the hackle through the thorax and secure at the head. Trim and excess
10. Pull the turkey quill section over the thorax to form the wing case and secure at the head. Trim any excess and whip finish.

This fly really looks great in the water- lots of action and movement, lots of light refraction off the soft feathers. Tied in black it could imitate a helgramite, and in tan it could imitate a golden stonefly. In bigger sizes, this looks good for smallmouth bass as well. This could even be a good warm water fly imitating a dragonfly nymph.