

**Fly of the Month**

*By Mike Ott*

**Basic Gray Scud**

This is my scud. There are many like it, but this one is mine... You know the drill. Everyone has a favorite and this one is mine. I cannot begin to estimate how many fish I have caught on scuds over the years. Needless to say, here in Missouri the scud is the mainstay of most trout's diet. They are in the water 24/7 - 365 days a year, and provide an abundant, accessible, rich food source. This is one of my "go to" flies.



- Hook: Dai-Riki 135 Size 14-20 (also Mustad 3906, Tiemco 2457 or 2487, etc.)
- Thread: 8/0 Gray, Red, or Orange (I color-code mine by weight)
- Weight: Lead or Lead-Free wire appropriately sized to hook Tail: Mallard Flank or Partridge
- Body: Gray Muskrat with Antron or Sow-Scud Light Sowbug
- Shell Back: Strip of clear heavy plastic bag
- Ribbing: 5X Tippet or other mono (smaller on smaller sizes)

**HOW TO TIE:**

1. Pinch down hook barb (or buy barbless hooks) and secure in vise.
2. Wrap on desired wraps of lead/lead-free wire.
3. Start thread and secure lead wire base leaving thread at rear of hook.
4. Tie in a short tail – about 1/4 the body length – and trim waste.
5. Tie in shell back material so it is flat and not bunched up.
6. Tie in ribbing so that it comes off the far side of the shell back material.
7. Loosely dub a full body that tapers at both ends and pick out a little.
8. Brush dubbing down while pulling shell back over the top and tie off.
9. Wrap an evenly spaced rib tightly to create defined segments and tie off.
10. Build and whip finish head.
11. Using a non-serrated jawed pliers, squish the finished fly vertically. Pick out the exposed dubbing to create legs. Trim a bit if too long.

Feel free to experiment with sizes, weights, colors, materials, shell back or not, wire ribs, flash-backs, mouth-parts or not, hooks styles, etc.

Fish this dead drift close to bottom. I use lightly weighted scuds as a dropper under heavier flies, and heavier-weighted scuds as the top fly. On a "good scud day", I have used a double scud rig with one heavy size 14 and one light size 18.