

Fly of the Month

By Mike Ott

My Green Hare's Ear Variant

Of all the traditional flies available to the fly fisherman, probably the most universal is the Gold-Ribbed Hare's Ear Nymph. It has been around a long time and has been a tried and true fish catcher. We teach it in our fly tying classes, and it is one of the required patterns in the FFI's Bronze Certification program. Just as importantly, though, there are a million ways to tie a non-traditional "hare's ear" nymph. That being said, I specifically do not call mine by the traditional name if it is not the original fly. After working on my bronze and silver certifications, I have a new appreciation for traditional fly patterns and their originators.

While this fly is made with hare's ear dubbing, it is merely a variant at best. After Ed Heist's presentation, I decided to try hot spots of a different color. Apparently green is more visible at depth, so this is my green hare's ear variant. I must say, Ed, the green has been a very successful addition.



Hook: Hanak BL554 Size 14 or 16

Bead: Gold Tungsten 7/64" or 1/8"

Weight: .015 Lead or Lead-Free wire

Thread: 8/0 Brown

Hot Spot: Fluorescent Green UniStretch or Floss

Ribbing: Olive Chrystal Flash

Body: Hare's Ear Dubbing

Hackle: Hungarian Partridge

Collar: SLF UV Hare's Ear Dubbing

- 1) Place bead on hook and secure in vise. Add 5 or 6 wraps of lead wire and shove up under the bead.
- 2) Start thread behind bead and secure lead in place with several crossing thread wraps. Whip Finish.
- 3) Start Uni-Stretch behind lead and wrap flat turns to the hook bend. Make a couple of flay layers at the hook bend to form a section about 2 hook-eyes long about as thick as the hook wire. Advance back to lead and whip-finish. Start brown thread again and tie in 1 strand of crystal flash, then form a dubbing loop just in front of the hot spot. Advance thread back to the bead.
- 4) Add a sparse, tapered amount of dubbing loosely in the dubbing loop and spin tight. Wrap forward to just behind the bead – remember to leave it a bit sparse. Tie off the dubbing loop and trim excess.
- 5) Brush out the dubbed body to make it fuzzy, then rib with the crystal flash. Tie off and trim ribbing.
- 6) Tie in the partridge feather by the tip and remove the fibers from the far side. Make two wraps to form a soft hackle and tie off. Trim excess.
- 7) Softly dub a small amount of the SLF Hares Ear dubbing in front of the hackle and behind the bead. Whip finish and trim excess thread. Brush out the dubbing a bit so that it is a little messy.

Remember to tie this fly sparsely – brushed out hare's ear and SLF dubbing hold a lot of air bubbles and reflect a lot of light. The green butt and olive ribbing give it a subtle green glow in the water, and all that spikey dubbing and

partridge legs add lots of wiggly parts. I added a couple of strands of crystal flash as a wing, but I cannot decide if I like it there or not. We'll let the fish decide.

This fly should be fished dead-drift and then let swing up and across in the current at the end of the drift. I know the Hanak hooks are a little pricey, but there are few better hooks out there with the right shape and no barb. I blend my own hare's ear dubbing because most on the market is just not right. Let me know if you need to know how I do it.