

Summer 2019 Fly Of The Month #2

Trico Spinner

By Bill Wichers



Materials:

Hook – size 16 or 18 medium or light weight scud hook

Tail - none

Abdomen - tying thread (8/0 black for a male trico, cream or chartreuse for a female trico)

Wing – 2 strands of pearl crystal flash mixed with a sparse amount of white organza, widow's web, crinkle hair, McFlylon, polypro or EP fibers

Thorax – small amount of black dubbing

I use scud hooks because even the lightweight ones seem to hold big fish better than standard dry fly hooks of the same size. Plus, I tie a one-size smaller body on the hook – I'll tie a size 18 body on a size 16 scud hook, starting the abdomen at the hook bend and wrapping forward. Tricos have short, fat bodies, so make the abdomen rather thick.

You can either tie the wing in first (which I usually do) or second, after you've built the abdomen. Figure 8-wrap the wings to the hook and add a thin noodle of black dubbing to the thread. Figure 8-wrap the dubbing around the wings to form a ball-shaped thorax. Add one or two (I do two) whip finishes and you are finished. I don't use head cement on this fly, hence the two whip finishes. Trim the wings so they are a little longer than the body.

I don't do tails on this fly because the fish don't care, tails take time, can be a pain to tie in and while tails help float this fly, I don't care if it floats (because you usually can't see it anyway) and it's equally effective floating or sinking just below the surface. I also wonder if stiff micro fibbet tails might interfere with hook sets at times on tiny flies like these.

Tricos are a very small mayfly, but can be unbelievably abundant at times in good habitat. Even big trout will key in on tricos during this hatch. The spinner fall is the best time to fish this pattern, usually starting early in the morning and sometimes lasting through late morning. Tricos hatch in some streams beginning in mid-July and can persist into October as multiple generations are produced during the summer. The eggs laid in July can hatch in August and eggs from August hatch in September or October.

This is a very simple but effective fly, but it is difficult to see, so you need to use it in tandem with a dry fly pattern that is visible. I like to use a hopper or tan cdc caddis as the indicator fly with this trico pattern, as you can get strikes on these

patterns as well. When trout are rising to trico spinners, dead drift these flies over rising fish and set the hook lightly if your indicator fly moves. In states like Wyoming and Idaho that allow 3 or more flies, use an indicator fly with two tricos. I put the first trico 18 – 24 inches below the indicator fly and the second trico 12 – 16 inches below the first trico. And I use 4.5 or 5X tippet to the trico(s), even though I get more strikes on 6 or 7X. Even my subtle hook sets are usually too strong on larger fish as I break most of them off on 6 or 7X. I dress the trico with floatant before I fish it, and sometimes freshen it with dry powder, but it fishes well whether it's floating, sinking or laying on its side, so don't worry if it's not floating – just keep an eye on your indicator fly.