

Fly of the Month

Skwalla Nymph *by Greg Chester*

Spring is just around the corner and the sight of trout eagerly rising to a dry fly won't come too soon. We saw a few sporadic rises early in February but it's still a sub-surface, bottom bouncing presentation that draws the most strikes at the moment.

We're fortunate in the Bitterroot to have such a diverse bug population and even more privileged to have the Skwalla Stonefly to kick off our spring fishing. Before hitting the river most anglers wait for the bugs to surface, but if you're really eager to get started I think you'll be pleased with some nymph fishing until the fish start looking up, plus you'll likely have your special spot all to yourself.

This basic pattern has worked well for me over the years and you can imitate any stonefly nymph by simply changing color and size. You may embellish it with soft hackle or rubber legs, a segmented thorax or a bead but it works quite well as shown. This pattern calls for dark olive but dark brown will likely work as well. I tie it weighted and add split shot when fishing. Work on getting a natural drift - it's just as important when bouncing nymphs along the bottom as it is dead drifting a dry over risers.

Good tying and good fishing!



Recipe

Hook: Size 8 or 10 heavy wire 3XL nymph hook (Dai-Riki #710 e.g.)

Weight: 10 – 15 wraps of .025 diameter lead wire

Thread: 3/0 Dark olive Unithread

Tails: Black or dark brown goose biots, split

Abdomen: Dark olive Hare-Tron dubbing tightly wrapped in a dubbing loop

Ribbing: Black vinyl v-rib, medium

Wing case: Dark olive or dark brown Thin Skin

Thorax: Dark olive Hare-Tron dubbing picked out on sides & trimmed flat on bottom

Head: Tying thread