

## November FOTM

### Baetis Floating Nymph

By  
Greg Chester

It is fall Baetis time, a favorite hatch of mine on all Montana waters. In the Bitterroot system I had success with these little bugs about 2 weeks ago at Wally, High Banks, the town stretch and Blodgett Park. They also emerged in the afternoon on Rock Creek near the Hog Back.

As they say, "Fall is Small" which has proven to be true over the years. The #16's and #18's you use in the spring look like buoys among their fall relatives - I only take #20 - #24's in my box. The exception is a few larger parachutes to use as indicators when fishing 2 dries, a successful technique if you can manage your drift.

This pattern successfully imitates nymphs that trout munch just below the surface showing their back and tail but no head when they rise. If you see an air bubble after the rise they're more than likely taking duns or emergers. Their preferences change often so be alert to different rise forms and don't wait too long to change patterns. For the most part you'll be fishing this as a dry fly – down and across, drag free, visible take, etc.

This bug in a size 24 is definitely hard to see in most conditions. A good solution as I mentioned above is to drop the nymph behind a larger, more visible pattern. Make sure the trailing tippet is 2' – 3' long, size 6X or 6 ½ X. If fish start rejecting this arrangement then you'll have to go without a trailer and hope for the best.



Here's the menu

Thread	8/0 Olive Dun Unithread or equivalent.
Hook	Tiemco 101 size 20 – 24 (I like the 101 with its ring eye – more gap for hooking fish)
Tail	4 – 6 strands of dark speckled Coq de Leon ( or dark partridge fibers)
Ribbing	X-small copper wire
Wing case	1 mil medium dun closed cell foam
Thorax	Olive-brown Ice Dub
Head	Tying thread

Although diminutive the bug is fairly easy to tie – just watch your proportions. Start by wrapping the shank with thread, then tie in the tailing material and copper wire near the bend. The tail should be about 1/3 the length of the shank. Wrap a smooth base of thread tapering up to the thorax area.

Next rib the abdomen with copper wire and tie off at the thorax.

Cut a thin strip of foam and tie in near the thorax with the excesses facing toward the hook bend.

Follow this up with a shaggy thorax of Ice Dub.

Next pull the foam tightly over the thorax and tie off just behind the hook eye. Snip off the excess foam, form a small, neat head and whip finish. With your bodkin tease out some dubbing fibers on both sides of the thorax to simulate legs. If you cement the head do so carefully then clear the eye if needed before putting it in your box. These bugs are hard enough to tie on without having to clear the eye on the water in windy, cold conditions.

If inclined feel free to mess around with different materials, I've tied this with a loop of CDC instead of the foam for the wing case, a wrapped goose biot instead of a thread abdomen, soft hackle or Zelon tail and partridge legs (very finicky). This yields a very attractive bug in your box but trout readily take this simpler pattern.

Feel free to call with any questions or comments regarding tying or fishing this bug.

Happy tying! *Greg Chester 363-0033*