

FLY OF THE MONTH- March 2020

The Flymph Wet Fly

By

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I wanted to take this opportunity and write about the Flymph wet fly; what they are, how you fish them, their history and why they are so important in our fly boxes. Some of you might have never heard of it or fished one. Below is the full scoop on it.

The American School of West Flies

In America in the early parts of the 20th century most of the fishing was done with winged flies. They were fished to imitate adults and not the sparse wingless spider style like back in Yorkshire times.

Many of these winged wet patterns employed mallard & turkey quill wings as Ray Bergman included in his "Fishing bible" book in 1938 called "Trout" where Dr. Burke painted and displayed all the color plates in his famous book.

1941 brought us James Leisenring's and Pete Hidy's *The Art of Tying the Wet Fly*, later expanded upon in 1971's "The Art of Tying the Wet Fly & Fishing the Flymph." Both of the books were written on freshly born seminal wingless wet flies. Leisenring tied and fished both dry flies and three types of wet flies, winged wet flies, wingless wet flies (also called flymph) and short hackled thorax nymphs. In 1971 Pete Hidy added a chapter to *The Art of Tying the Wet Fly* and in it he coined the term "Flymph" to represent the life stage of an aquatic invertebrate that was in the midst of transitioning from nymph to adult.

What is a flymph? A flymph is a soft hackled wet fly that is defined by the life-stage it is meant to represent. As an emerger it's meant to be fished in the upper water column up to the surface film. This could be anywhere from a couple of feet deep to only millimeters under the surface. I have included a few my own ties in this article.

Many flymphs, as well as soft hackles, should be sparsely tied using the soft hackle from birds like plover, grouse, partridge, starling, pheasant, or quail, to name few. The flymph body is made out of rabbit, fox, or artificial dubbing, or silk can be used for the underbody or ribbing as well as antron for the tail shuck. The body of the flymph should be robust since it imitates the emerging stage between nymph and adult.

How do you fish flymphs effectively? To present a flymph you cast upstream of the trout lie, allow it to sink a couple of feet with line mending, fly weight, or weight on your leader, then retrieve it towards the surface with help by lifting the rod tip, or tensioning of the line- either by the angler or the current.

The result is that the fly ascends in front of the fish and appears as a hatching bug. Personally, I have fished flymphs across and down similar to steelhead /salmon streamer fishing. This technique works as well but most of the hook ups happen on tension in the line way below us where trout in many cases meets the fly at a very tight angle and either hookups are missed or broken off at the tippet. But every now and then we do hook them. Fishing upstream and across allows the trout to rise after the emerging bug towards the surface and take it and return to its lie. Turning its head while returning back to its lie assures the correct and best hook set.

I attached few photos from last weekend fishing on our beloved Bitterroot river with a tandem of flymphs catching beautiful Bitterroot rainbows and cut bows. Tight lines everyone! *Les Korcala*



Honey Dun Flymph
 Hook Maruto 03BL
 Silk cream
 Tail Collins hen ginger
 Body ginger dubbing with gold wire
 Hackle hen neck ginger

Grouse & Pheasant
 Mustad 3366 #12
 Tail Pheasant Back feather
 Body Pheasant Tail
 Rib Copper Wire fine
 Thorax Peacock Herl
 Hackle English Red Grouse



