

FLY OF THE MONTH JUNE 2019

CDC Caddis

by Bill Wichers

Materials:

Hook: standard dry fly hook, sizes 8 – 20

Thread: 6/0 – 14/0, color matching the thorax

Abdomen: either thin dubbed body or cdc feather tied in by its tip and wrapped around hook shank

Wing: 2 or 3 (on bigger flies) cdc feathers matched and laid flat over the abdomen in caddis/stonefly style

Thorax: dubbing, fluffed out a bit to give the appearance of legs

This is a really versatile and easy fly to tie. It's very effective when adult caddis or spruce moths are out and about. Hook size, wing and body colors are whatever you need to match the hatch. For an October caddis, I use a size 8 or 10 hook, orangish dubbed body and 3 tan or cream cdc feathers for the wing. For the small tan caddis common on the Missouri and North Platte tailwaters from July through September, it's a size 14 or 16 hook, tan cdc feather for the abdomen, 2 tan feathers for the wing and a tan dubbed thorax. The spruce moth I tie is on a size 12 hook with a tan abdomen and thorax and a cream wing.

I am sold on Trout Hunter brand cdc – it is by far the best quality cdc I've seen. If you use another brand, plan on tying in 4-8 cdc feathers for the wing as they will be a lot sparser than the Trout Hunter. Other brands work well if you use them for the abdomen – you can wrap a nice, thin body with them, but they don't work as well for wings.

Remember, with cdc, don't use standard thick gel floatant like Gink as they matt the fibers and you lose a lot of the natural buoyancy of the cdc fibers, plus, the fly won't look natural. Thin liquid floatants like Flyagra or High n Dry work well on cdc as do powdered floatants. When the fly gets soaked or covered in fish slime, I rinse it in the water, dry it thoroughly on my shirt or drying patch, blow on it and fluff it up with some powdered floatant or desiccant.

Tying instructions:

1. Wrap the thread around the hook shank from just behind the eye to above the barb.
- 2.a. From this spot above the barb, either tie in a cdc feather by the tip, grab the butt end with hackle pliers and twist the feather several times to make a thin noodle;
- 2.b. Or, form a thin, tight noodle of whatever dubbing you are using around the thread.
3. Then wrap the cdc or the dubbing a little over half way up the hook shank (leave plenty of room to tie in the wing and thorax).
4. Match up the tips of 2 or 3 cdc feathers, lay them flat over the top of the abdomen so the tips stick out just a little behind the back of the hook and tie them in at the front edge of the abdomen. If you have a hard time tying in these feathers at the same time with matching tips, either tie them in separately, or, trim them with scissors when you finish the fly. Also, the fish don't care if the wings don't match or lay perfectly flat over the top of the fly. If one or more feathers are tilted up, as long as the fly lands right side up, fish it.

5. Add a noodle of dubbing for your thorax and use a dubbing needle, dubbing brush or piece of velcro to fluff out the thorax a bit.
6. Whip finish once or twice (I always do 2) and you are done! I don't use head cement around cdc – they don't mix well. I've never had a head come unraveled with 2 whip finishes.
7. P.S. You can also tie in a dry fly hackle (one size smaller than your hook – use a size 16 hackle on a size 14 hook) after you tie in the wing but before you wrap the thorax. Then wrap the thorax and palmer the hackle a few times over/through the thorax if you'd like a bit more floatation or better semblance of legs. When I add hackle, I usually trim it below the hook so the fly lays flat on the water. I've included two photos of a size 16 tan caddis, one without hackle, one with a couple of turns of hackle. There is also a photo looking down on the fly showing how the wing should look.

