Parachute Damsel Adult

Fly Patterns brought to you by Charlie's FlyBox

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step: 1

Pattern Description

Damselflies are common on many stillwaters. These "Mosquito Hawks" as they are called, hatch after the nymph swims to the bank and crawls out of the water where it splits and the adult emergers. Immediately after hatching, these teneral adults are pale yellowish to tan to olive in color and rest on twigs and sticks along the banks while their bodies and wings dry. Gusting winds can blow these delicate tenerals into the water, as their wings have yet to dry and provide flight. The pattern shown here has its roots in Gary Borger's Parachute Damsel. The addition of the foam wingcase adds a bit of flotation to the fly and really grabs onto the hackle due to its compressability. The pre-made and colored braided nylon abdomen makes this a quick and easy pattern to tie, and is available in both the blue color and the olive and tan shades of the teneral, as well as red. I like to sight fish adult damsels to cruising fish in stillwaters, either from the bank (my favorite) or from a tube or pontoon boat. Tie the damsel on to a 9 foot 4X leader and present it well in front of a cruising fish. Sometimes a subtle twitch at

Materials Needed:

Hook: Daiichi 1640 #12-16
Thread: 6/0 UNI, Blue Extended
Body: Braided Damsel Body
Wingcase: Blue 2mm foam
Hackle: Grizzly Neck Hackle
Thorax: Blue dubbing, antron or wool

the right moment can pull fish in, but generally, I just let the fly sit and wait for the fish to find it. It seems they can see this pattern from pretty far away, as they make a long rush to the fly to inhale it. It's up to you to stay calm enough to keep from pulling the fly away before he gets his mouth around it, which is MUCH easier said than done.
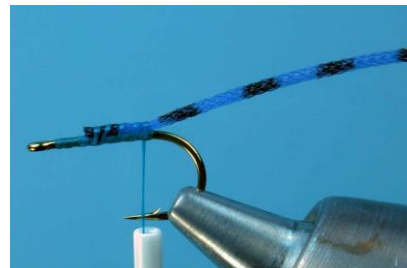
step: 2

Start the thread at the eye of the hook and wrap back to the bend forming a smooth thread base.
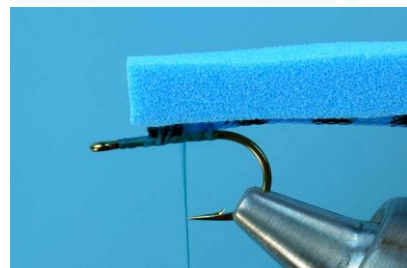

step: 3

Tie in a two and a half inch long length of braided damsel body material about three eye lengths back from the eye of the hook. Bind the damsel body down tightly all the way to the bend.

step: 4

Cut a strip of foam that is slightly narrower than the gap of the hook.

step: 5

Bind the foam to the hook starting at the tie down point of the body material and wrap back over it to the bend of the hook.

step: 6

Pull the remaining foam upwards and wrap a few parachute/horizontal wraps around the base of the foam post.

step: 7

Size, select and prepare a grizzly hackle feather and tie it in with the inside of the feather toward the hook shank in front of the foam post. Wrap over the bare quill to the base of the post.

step: 8

Bring the feather up so it is parallel to the foam strip and wrap a few turns of thread around both the foam and the base of the feather stem, tying the feather to the foam post. End with the thread at the bottom of this post.

step: 9

Wrap the hackle three or four turns down the post, one wrap under the last.

Lift the wrapped portion of the hackle out of the way and expose the tip of the hackle feather. Tie the hackle feather off with a pinch wrap at the base of the post. Clip the excess hackle.

Tilt the foam post back toward the bend of the hook to open the area under the hackle.

Apply a thin layer of dubbing to the thread and wrap a slim profiled thorax covering the foam tie down. End with the thread just behind the eye of the hook.

Pull the foam wing post over the top of the thorax and tie it down behind the hook eye. Preen the hackle fibers back from the front of the fly when you do this to keep from trapping them under the thread and foam.

step: 14

Trim the excess foam into a short nub at the head of the fly. Whip finish either over the tie down on the foam or move the thread immediately behind the hook eye and whip finish it there.

step: 15

Top view

step: 16

Quarter view