

## Parachute Blue Wing Olive



### Fly Patterns brought to you by Charlie's FlyBox

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### step: 1

#### Pattern Description

Fall is here and the Blue wing Olives are either happening or about to happen on all of our favorite rivers. This simple parachute pattern has become a go-to fly for me over the years, particularly for fish that are eating a random bug here and there rather than rising steadily (I like the Mole Fly for steady risers...always go with the given;-) The main point of this tutorial is a new to me technique of tying your parachute hackle off on the actual parachute post rather than onto the hook shank. I had been hearing of this method for a couple years but had always been happy with my old method...until one day I finally tried it and yes, I must admit, the tie off on the post is both easier and cleaner all around. I thought I'd throw in the biot abdomen option on this fly as well. I spent a lot of days this summer fishing Parachute flies from the bow of Captain Prowse's ClackaCraft, and found that the biot bodied flies seemed to resist getting soaked better than standard dubbed bodied flies, so I have been working more biots into my fishing rotation. Anyway...there's a lot to learn on this one simple little pattern, so you best get started...this tutorial also has

#### Materials Needed:

Hook: TMC 100 #16-24..... Thread: 10/0 Gudebrod, gray..... Tail: Gray Spade hackle fibers..... Wing: White or gray McFlylon..... Hackle: Blue Dun (gray) rooster neck or saddle feather..... Abdomen: Olive Gray Goose Biot..... Thorax: Olive Gray Superfine Dubbing.....

a few new features I worked in through Photoshop to help show the path of the thread on some of the critical steps. Please let me know what you think!

**step: 2**

Start the thread at the 75% point and wrap a smooth thread base back to the bend. Take an entire length of goose biots from the package and place them in a shallow bowl of warm water. This step will become important later so do this NOW.



**step: 3**

Peel a clump of about a dozen spade hackle fibers from a spade hackle found on the outer edges of a dry fly neck (see the Parachute Adams on the site for a clearer explanation of this step, if needed). Make sure these fibers are aligned at their tips. Measure the hackle fibers against the shank so they are equal to one shank length. Tie the hackle fibers in at the bend so the tips extend one shank length beyond the bend of the hook. Wrap forward over the butt ends of the fibers to just past the halfway point on the shank.



**step: 4**

Clip the remaining butt ends from the hackle fibers flush with the hook shank. Continue wrapping the thread forward up to the eye of the hook, making a smooth thread base.



**step: 5**

Return the thread to the 75-80 percent point on the shank.



**step: 6**

Comb out a strand of Mcflylon with a wire brush to separate the fibers. Divide the clump into an appropriate amount of fiber for the fly size you are tying. For a size eighteen fly, about one-fifth of a strand is about right. We will be doubling this amount in the finished wing so use that thought as a rule of thumb as you gauge the size of the clump. Tie the clump of Mcflylon in across the shank with a pair of diagonal wraps, going from the back/near side of the wing to the front/far side of the wing. These are the beginnings of a set of X-wraps. While I am here, I'll explain my new preference for McFlylon. McFlylon has a bit more crinkle than Float Viz. While I still like Float Viz for parachute posts and spinner wing type applications, I have found that the McFlylon holds its shape a bit better one the fly when in use. Either material will do the job just fine.



**step: 7**

Make another pair of diagonal wraps around the wing, this time, from the front/near side to the back/far side. These wraps will set the wing perpendicular to the hook shank like a pair of spinner wings.



**step: 8**

Bring the thread to the immediate front edge of the wings. Pull both wings up vertically above the hook. This spinner wing style tie in leaves ZERO bulk on the hook shank and makes for a much cleaner fly in the end.



**step: 9**

Begin to post the wing by wrapping around the base of both wings forming a thread post at the bottom. I tie left handed and make these wraps in a clockwise direction when viewed from the top. The trick to forming a tight thread post is to start wrapping at the very bottom of the thread post with medium tension on the thread, then begin to work up the post a thread width at a time to climb up as far as needed. It takes a bit of practice but if you don't try, you'll never get it!



**step: 10**

Continue the thread post about twenty percent of a shank length up the wing, grouping the two wings into a single unit. Wrap back down the post with firm thread wraps with a fair amount of tension. When you reach the bottom of the post with the thread, make an anchoring wrap around the hook shank to keep the whole thing from peeling apart.



**step: 11**

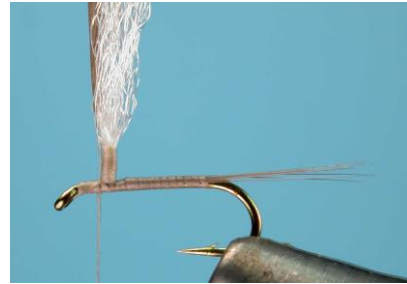
Select a rooster feather that has barbs about equal to one and a half hook gaps. Prepare the feather by cutting off the fluff at the bottom of the stem, leaving just the sweet spot of the feather where the barbs are all uniform in length and the quill is thin and supple. The stem at the base of most feathers is a bit thick and can cause trouble when wrapping a parachute post, so try to eliminate that part of the feather from the start. Peel the hackle fibers from the bottom of the feather, leaving the bare stem exposed for about half a hook shank length. Tie the feather in right behind the hook eye, by this bare stem, and wrap back over it tightly to the base of the wing. The outside of the feather should be facing UP at this time.



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**step: 12**

Prop the feather up along the wing so the inside of the feather is touching the wingpost.



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**step: 13**

Wrap the thread around the wing post and the hackle stem from the base of the wing post up to the top of the wingpost. Make these wraps tight, but don't make too many of them. Wrap the thread back down the post to the hook shank and again, take an anchor wrap around the hook shank. You have just posted the hackle feather to the wingpost.



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**step: 14**

Wrong pic above! Try this one: Wrap the thread around the wing post and the hackle stem from the base of the wing post up to the top of the wingpost. Make these wraps tight, but don't make too many of them. Wrap the thread back down the post to the hook shank and again, take an anchor wrap around the hook shank. You have just posted the hackle feather to the wingpost.



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**step: 15**

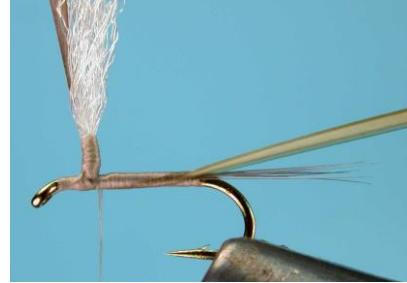
Return the thread to the bend of the hook, taking care to keep a smooth thread base on the way back.



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**step: 16**

Select a goose biot from the quill and strip it off. I like to soak the entire quill of biots in warm water to soften the feathers for wrapping around the hook, so if you haven't done that yet, do so. Tie the biot in by its tip at the base of the tail with the fuzzy edge on the topside and the notch at the base of the feather facing down. We are going to make a smooth biot body, so we want that fuzzy edge to lead as we wrap, and be covered by the smooth trailing edge. Wrap the thread forward over the tip of the feather, covering the tip and making a smooth thread base as you go. If you are tying a bigger fly (#16-18) you may want to build up a bit of a taper with the thread at this point. Leave the tying thread hanging at the base of the wing. It doesn't hurt to add a small drop of head cement to the thread wraps between the base of the tail and the wing post at this time. We will wrap the biot over the wet cement and that will add some durability.



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**step: 17**

Grab the butt end of the biot in your hackle pliers (I like the teardrop style pliers for this). Wrap the biot in close, overlapping turns, up to the base of the wing and tie it off there. The first wrap you make with the biot will show the fuzzy edge on the front, so you are going to space your wraps so the trailing edge of the feather overlaps this fuzzy edge leaving the smooth segments seen here. Soaking the biot ahead of time makes it much more pliable and makes it easier to both wrap the biot and compress it when you tie off. Clip the excess biot flush.



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**step: 18**

Apply a thin strand of dubbing to the thread. Begin wrapping this dubbing immediately behind the hook eye, and wrap back to the base of the wing.



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**step: 19**

Continue back with the dubbing, crossing to the backside of the wing, and building an elongated oval-shaped thorax. When you run out of dubbing, you want your thread to be hanging right at the wingpost.



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**step: 20**

Bring the thread around the near side of the post and let it hang on the near side of the hook.



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**step: 21**

Grab the tip of the hackle feather in your rotary hackle pliers and pull the feather out over the hook eye. You want to bend the feather over backwards so the inside of the feather will face up as you wrap. Wrap the feather from the top of the post to the bottom, one turn under the last for a total of about 5 or six turns.



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**step: 22**

Pull the hackle pliers down on the near side of the hook. Pick up the thread and make a clockwise turn around the base of the wingpost, between the last wrap of hackle and the dubbed thorax. Make another tight clockwise turn to cinch everything down. It is imperative that these wraps don't catch any hackle fibers, so take care to keep them tight to the base of the post.



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**step: 23**

Alright, now the tie-off procedure on this fly seems a bit tricky but is really pretty simple, so stay with me here. Your thread is coming from the backside of the wingpost (#1). You are going to bring the thread forward to the hook eye and down on the far side of the eye (#2). Now you will bring the thread up from the far side of the hook right behind the hook eye (#3), catching the thread against the shank and bringing it back to its normal direction of travel, which is around the hook. Make another wrap of thread around the shank right behind the hook eye.



**step: 24**

Whip finish the thread by setting up the whip finisher and working the knot in around the hook shank but under the hackle fibers. Pull the knot up from the bottom of the hook to prevent catching any hackle fibers in the loop. Clip the thread and the remaining hackle tip at this point.



**step: 25**

Trim the wing to one shank length long, straight across. If you look closely at this photo, you can see the path the thread takes when tying off the hackle as well as its path to the hook eye for whip finishing.



**step: 26**

Turn the hook away from you in the vise so the hackle is facing you like the end of a cylinder. Place a tiny drop of THIN head cement on the hackle fibers on the topside of the fly. If the cement is thin enough, it will run down the hackle fibers into the base of the wingpost gluing the hackle stem and thread post together. I like to use Wapsi Gloss Coat for this as it is thin enough from the bottle and dries very hard.



**step: 27**



Pretty slick how it runs down the hackle fibers, eh? Here's another little tip...if your cement is too thick or you goop a little too much on, DO NOT try to wipe it off. Let the cement dry on the hackle fibers. Once it is dry it will peel off easily in a clump, but if you mess with it when it's wet, it will glue all the hackle fibers together looking like something you'd buy in a Big Box Store...Blah!



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**step: 28**

Finished fly, side view. Yummy!

