

CHARLIE'S FLY BOX, INC.



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Cranefly Larva



Fly Patterns brought to you by Charlie's FlyBox

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Charlie Craven and Charlie's FlyBox, Inc.

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step: 1

Pattern Description

Craneflies are of the order Tipulidae, also known as Daddy Long Legs in their adult form, and rockworms in the larval form. They are, essentially, a giant midge, and resemble their smaller cousins both in the larval and adult stages. Cranefly larvae are rather large, from one to three inches and quite fat and resemble a big, drifting turd. This is the best description I can give and really is pretty accurate. Cranes bury into the river bottom and only become dislodged when high flows wash them out. Spring runoff and flushing flows on tailwaters push the cranefly larvae into the food chain and the trout relish them. This is a great pattern up on Gray Reef, as well as the South Platte, Colorado and Bighorn. Many waters are home to cranes, but the adults hatch at night, and so, are invisible to many anglers. Anytime you encounter big flows on your favorite waters, try this pattern. I like to fish it as a top fly in a two fly rig, under an indicator. The heavily weighted underbody often eliminates the need for additional weight on the leader, but depending on the water flow and speed, you may need to add a split-shot too. This fly was my secret ace in the hole back in my South Platte days. While everyone else was fishing

Materials Needed:

Hook: 200R #4-10 Weight: Lead Wire, .035 for a number 4
Thread: 6/0 or 70 Denier, olive
Tail: Grizzly Marabou Rib: 3X Monofilament Shellback: 1/4" Scudback, Swiss Straw, or Thinskin Body: Wapsi Sow-Scud Dubbing, Olive-Gray

worms and scuds, I'd throw the meat...it works, trust me.

step: 2

Wrap twelve to fifteen wrap of lead wire around the center of the shank and break off the ends. Smooth the ends down. Be sure there is about a quarter shank worth of space between the front edge of the lead wraps and the hook eye.



step: 3

Start the tying thread at the back edge of the lead wraps and build a thread base back and forth over the lead in a cross-hatch pattern, then back to where the thread hangs even with the point on the barb of the hook. The thread wraps will just anchor the lead; there is no need to completely cover the lead here.



step: 4

Tie in a small grizzly marabou feather at the bend with the tips extending back about one gap width. The tail is just a short brush of marabou, to add a bit of movement.



step: 5

Wrap forward over the butt end of the marabou, covering the lead wraps with the excess. Continue wrapping over the marabou butts up to the index point on the hook, and then clip the excess.



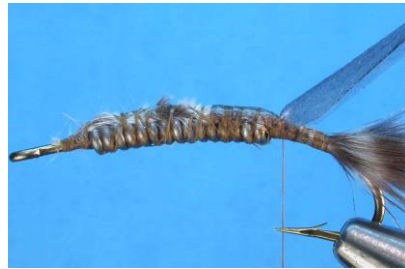
step: 6

Tie in an eight-inch length of 3X monofilament at the mid-point on the shank on the far side of the hook. Wrap back over the mono to the bend of the hook, taking care to keep it along the far side of the hook.



step: 7

Move the thread to the mid-point on the shank and tie in the shellback material of your choice. This fly is tied using Scudback, but Swiss Straw or Thinskin make a great shell too.



step: 8

Pull the shellback taut and wrap back over it to the bend of the hook, again, taking care to keep the shell centered on top of the hook as you go. Move the thread to the center of the hook in preparation for the dubbing.



step: 9

Dub a fat, tapered body from the bend of the hook to the index point. The body should be sort of a long football shape as shown here.



step: 10

Pull the shellback over the top of the dubbing and tie it down at the index point. Do not clip the excess yet.



step: 11

Spiral wrap the mono ribbing through the body with seven or eight evenly spaced turns. Pull tight on the mono as you wrap to create the segments. Tie the mono off at the index point. Clip the shellback material and the mono flush against the hook at the index point.



step: 12

Build a smooth thread head to cover the butt ends of the shell and mono and whip finish. Clip the thread.



step: 13

Mottle the shellback with a marker. I like to use spots to break up the coloration a bit, although squiggly lines do the job too. Let your imagination and artistic side take over.



step: 14

Use a wire brush to pick out the dubbing on the bottom of the fly. Really get in there and brush the dubbing out. Craneflies don't have legs like a scud, but the shaggy dubbing absorbs water and creates a translucent effect to the dubbing.



step: 15

Finished fly, side view.



step: 16

Finished fly, top view.

