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Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear



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

There are some flies that just have an inherent 'fishiness' about them. The Gold Rib Hare's Ear is one of those flies. A non-descript, buggy compilation of fur and feathers, the Hare's Ear won't win any beauty contests, but is one of those flies that you may never want to be without. While I know I won't win any originality awards by demonstrating the Hare's Ear, its purpose here is twofold. You may not know it now, but the Hare's Ear encompasses virtually all the parts of a standard nymph as well as traditional proportions. We will learn to measure and tie in tails, cut and blend dubbing fur, wrap a rib, dub a tapered abdomen, tie in and fold a wingcase, dub a thorax and form a thread head all on this one simple fly. The kicker to all this is that once you learn these procedures, you'll have all the skills to tie a huge variety of nymphs. When you really boil them down, there is a whole group of flies that are tied exactly like the Hare's Ear, simply using different materials, so even if you're not fond of the Hare's Ear itself, for your own good, tie a few to

Materials Needed:

Hook: TMC 5262 #8-18 Thread: 70 Denier, dark brown Tail: India Hen Back Fibers Rib: Fine Gold Wire or Gold Oval Tinsel Abdomen: Natural Hare's Mask Dubbing Wingcase: Mottled Turkey Tail Thorax: Natural Hare's Mask Dubbing, Picked Out.

become familiar with the techniques and proportions. In addition to all of these techniques, you'll learn to tie the legendary Hare's Ear, which wouldn't be so bad even if you didn't learn anything else in the process. While the Hare's Ear is not a perfect match for anything, it looks a little like a lot of things. I like to use Hare's Ears in large sizes (6-12) as a simple stonefly nymph pattern, tied in both light (natural, bleached or dyed gold) and dark (black, brown and olive) color schemes and in smaller sizes to match anything from callibaetis in lakes to green drake nymphs in rivers. I simply alter the color and size to match the insect I have in mind. This flexibility is one of the reasons the Hare's Ear enjoys such popularity. I use hen saddle feathers for the tail of this fly rather than the guard hairs from the ears of a hare's mask for the reasons that they are much easier to work with and make a better looking tail. I also use real hare's mask fur cut from the mask of a real English Hare. Jackrabbit and cottontail won't cut it here; they're a whole different critter, as are the commercially packaged dubbings that come labeled as 'Hare's Ear'. Most of this stuff is plain old rabbit fur and doesn't have the short guard hairs inherent to the dubbing from the mask. The mix of nicely marked guard hairs and soft under fur from the hare's mask creates a perfectly buggy dubbing that is still easy to apply. When tying the Hare's Ear, keep the proportions in mind, as they are the foundation for many other nymphs. Tie some large and some small ones, thin and fat and an array of colors. This fly will teach you a variety of techniques and fill your fly box at the same time.

step: 2

Start by cutting all the fur off of the hare's mask that lies from the forehead of the rabbit down to the tip of its nose and from the inside edge of each eye to the opposite eye. Clip this hair as close to the skin as possible, but try not to get any of the fur from along the "cheeks". This fur will now be put into a dubbing blender, (also known as a coffee grinder), to mix it into the finished dubbing. A couple of short burst in the grinder will mix it nicely. Set the mixed dubbing aside for the time being.



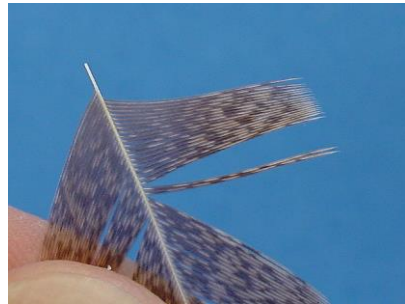
step: 3

Attach thread and wrap a base back to the bend.



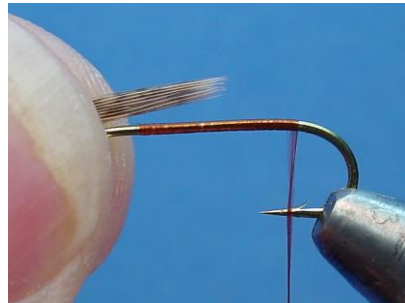
step: 4

Select a nicely mottled hen back feather and cut the fluff from its base. Preen a batch of fibers out from the center quill so that their tips are even. As a rule of thumb, this batch of fibers should be equal to the width of the hook gap.



step: 5

Strip these fibers from the quill, keeping the tips even. Roll the hen back fibers into a clump and measure them against the hook so they are one half a shank length long.



step: 6

Tie the clump of hen back in at the bend of the hook and wrap forward over the butt ends to at least the midpoint on the shank. Clip any remaining butts off.



step: 7

Tie in a six-inch length of gold wire about two eye lengths back from the hook eye and wrap back over it with the thread to the bend of the hook. Keep the wire along the side of the shank as you go. Return the thread to the sixty percent point on the hook.



step: 8

Apply the hare's mask dubbing to the thread and build a tapered abdomen from the base of the tail to the seventy-five percent point on the shank. The taper should be thicker at the front than the rear and evenly tapered.



step: 9

Spiral wrap the gold wire through the dubbing to form the rib with six to eight turns. Tie the wire off at the front edge of the abdomen and break off the excess.



step: 10

Wrap the tying thread back over the front edge of the abdomen to the sixty percent point on the shank forming a relatively smooth thread base for the wingcase. Cut a slip of turkey tail that is about as wide as the gap of the hook.



step: 11

Prepare the slip by cutting the tip end square and lay it on top of the thread base at the front of the abdomen with the inside of the feather facing up and the tip facing forward.



step: 12

Tie in the turkey tail on top of the front edge of the abdomen. Take care to keep the slip from folding or splitting during the tie down. Wrap over the slip to the sixty percent point on the hook forming a smooth thread base. Return the thread to the index point.



step: 13

Apply more hare's mask dubbing to the thread and start wrapping it from the rear edge of the index point back toward the wingcase.



step: 14

Continue dubbing to the base of the wingcase and then forward again to the rear edge of the index forming a thick thorax. Build a short thread base on the remaining bare portion of the shank between the eye and the front edge of the thorax dubbing.



step: 15

Fold the turkey wingcase slip forward over the thorax dubbing and tie it down in the index point. It is best to do this by holding the wingcase out over the hook eye with your thread hand and loosely passing the thread over the tie down area with your material hand. This ensures that the wingcase forms to the top of the thorax and doesn't roll off to the side.



step: 16

Cut the remaining butt end of the wingcase off flush against the shank at the back of the hook eye. Build a smooth thread head to cover the butts and whip finish.



step: 17

Pick some of the guard hairs out of the thorax dubbing with a dubbing brush, bodkin or a piece of Velcro. These guard hairs will imitate the legs of the insect.



step: 18

Finished fly, top view. Notice the proportions of the abdomen and thorax and the width of the wingcase.



step: 19

Finished fly, side view. Notice abdominal taper, spacing of the rib and length of the tail.

