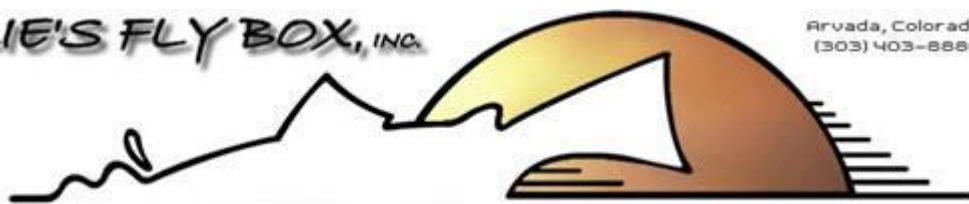


CHARLIE'S FLY BOX, INC.



Arvada, Colorado
(303) 403-8880



Green Drake Cripple



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

I came up with this Cripple pattern several years ago after a particularly frustrating Green Drake hatch on the Frying Pan River. It seems as though Drakes actually hatch into adults under the water and emerge through the surface film as full-blown duns. At least, this is how it is supposed to work. More often than not, though, the emergers make it to the surface before they have completely freed themselves from their nymphal husk and end up trapped in the surface film with their wings and thorax partially out of the shuck and the rest of their bodies stuck inside it. They flop around on the water with a conspicuous urgency, seeming to know that their short life will not last much longer if they don't free themselves soon. Bad for them, good for the trout...The fish really key in on this unkempt emerger flopping around on the surface and eat them with wild abandonment. After watching several of these bugs emerge, the idea for this pattern spawned in my head. It really is a pretty simple pattern to tie and one that allows you to make a few

Materials Needed:

Hook: TMC 5212 #10 and 12, bent as shown
Thread: 6/0 Olive
Tail: Moose Hock
Rib: Fine Copper Wire
Abdomen: Brown Haretron
Dubbing
Hackle: Blue Dun Hen
Neck Underwing: Natural Mallard CDC
Overwing: Matched Blue Dun Hen
Hackle Tips
Thorax: Superfine Dubbing, Olive

departures from traditional tying rules. I make this fly asymmetrical, with one wing flat and the other upright to mimic the naturals trapped wing and flapping wing. The dun colored soft hackle imitates the struggling legs and the olive colored thorax matches the head of the natural as it pokes out of the nymphal husk. The back end of the fly (tail and abdomen) matches the nymph in both color and shape to replicate the still attached husk. The CDC under wing provides flotation and subtle movement. I have also tied this fly in smaller versions and in the appropriate colors to match PMDs as well. They hatch in the same way as the Drakes, so it makes sense that this pattern could be modified for use in either hatch. I find this fly works best on flatter water, where the bugs have more trouble breaking through the surface film and the fish have more time to inspect them. It works quite well on faster water as well but can require a bit of maintenance to keep it afloat through the rougher sections. As a side note, if the fly sinks a bit, go ahead and fish it out through the cast. As I said above, the emergers start to hatch underwater and this pattern is totally appropriate under the water as well. I use Frog's Fanny desiccant to dry the fly after each fish. One tip I may offer is to be sure to rinse the fly off in the water after releasing your fish, then daub it on your shirt to remove any excess water and fish slime. Brush on the Frog's Fanny and get back after 'em!

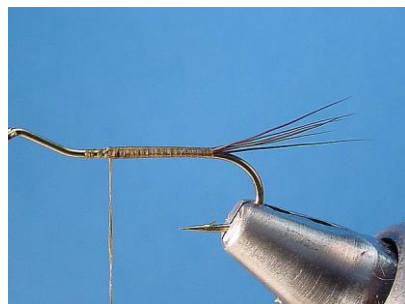
step: 2

Begin by pacing the hook in the vise and bending the front quarter of the hook up at about a 25-30 degree angle with a pair of pliers or hemostats. Be careful not to over bend the hook.



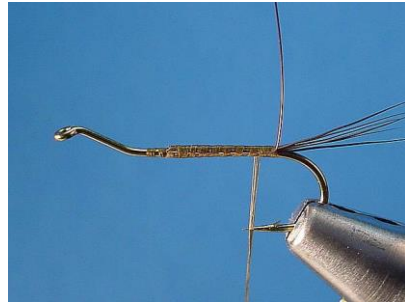
step: 3

Start the thread at the base of the new bend and wrap a thread base back to the hook bend. Cut, clean and stack a very small (6-8 fibers) clump of moose hock and tie it in for the tail at the bend of the hook. The tail should extend beyond the hook bend about one half a hook shank. Return the thread to the kink in the shank.



step: 4

Tie in a six-inch length of fine copper wire at the seventy-five percent point and wrap back over it to the hook bend.



step: 5

Dub the thread with brown Haretron dubbing and wrap the dubbing from the base of the tail up to the kink in the shank forming a thickly tapered abdomen.



step: 6

Spiral wrap the wire forward over the abdomen with six to eight evenly spaced turns. Tie the wire off at the front of the abdomen and break off the excess.



step: 7

Select a hen neck feather that has fibers equal to at least two hook gap widths. Prepare the feather by stripping its base of fibers, exposing the bare quill for about two to three hook eye lengths. Tie the feather in by its base at the front of the abdomen with the inside of the feather facing the hook shank.



step: 8

Fold the hackle fibers all to the backside of the quill by pulling up on the tip of the feather while you preen the fibers back. It may help to dampen your fingertips slightly and work the fibers in an up and down motion as you fold them.

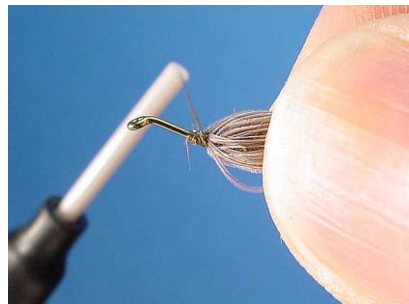


step: 9

Wrap the hackle forward with three tightly spaced, concentric turns and tie it off. Clip the excess feather.

step: 10

Hold all the fibers back along the abdomen and wrap the thread slightly back over the hackle at the base. This will slope the hackle fibers back wet fly style. Be sure not to pull the fibers too far above or below the hook. In other words, the hackle should still encompass the hook shank a full 360 degrees.



step: 11

Detail of swept back hackle.



step: 12

Trim the hackle fibers from the top of the body, exposing the abdomen.



step: 13

Select and match two CDC feathers and align them so their tips are opposed.



step: 14

Tie the CDC feathers in at the front of the abdomen with a few tight turns of thread. The tips should extend to the center of the tails and should splay out away from the body as shown. Two good quality CDC feathers should be more than enough. Don't get carried away.



step: 15

Clip the butt ends of the CDC feathers flush against the shank. This photo shows the length and angle of the wings from the top.



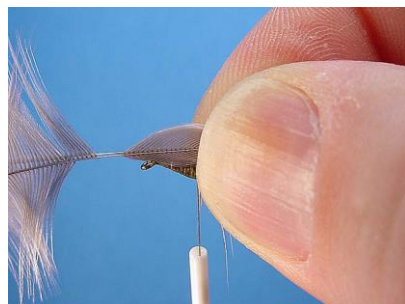
step: 16

Select two webby hen hackle tips and oppose their curves.



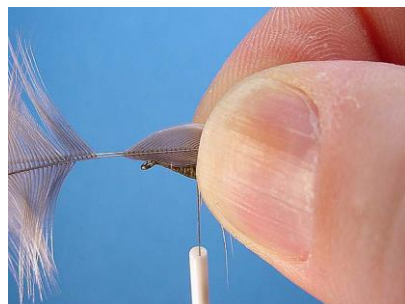
step: 17

Measure the hen feathers against the hook so their tips extend just slightly past the tips of the CDC.



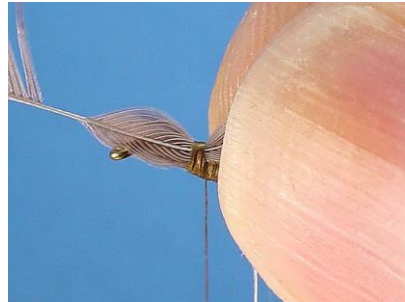
step: 18

Grasp the opposed hen feathers in the fingertips of your material hand directly over the front of the abdomen.



step: 19

Tie the hen feathers in with a pinch wrap. Form a narrow band of thread over the butt ends of the hen feathers to secure them.



step: 20

Clip the butt ends flush against the hook shank and build a smooth thread base over the stubs.



step: 21

The hen feathers should be splayed out over the top of the abdomen as shown.



step: 22

Grab the tip of the near wing (Of course, you could also do this to the far wing, but it would be much harder to photograph!) and pull it down and toward the front to misalign it. I try to get the feather to lie flat along the side of the fly to imitate a wing stuck in the surface film. Pull the feather on the far side up toward the ceiling so it is propped up like a wing that is flapping for all it's worth.



step: 23

The wings should now be non-symmetrical and splayed all over the place. It's nice to have a chance to do this on purpose, ain't it?

step: 24

Dub the thread with the olive Superfine dubbing and begin wrapping it at the back edge of the index point (one eye length back from the hook eye). Dub back up to the base of the wings and back again to the index point forming a blocky thorax.



step: 25

End with bare thread at the back of the index point. Whip finish and clip the thread.



step: 26

Turn the fly over in the vise and trim the hackle from the center on the bottom of the fly, again, exposing the abdomen.



step: 27

Finished Fly, Top View. Note the splay of the wings, the sparseness of the CDC under wings and the length of the tail.



step: 28

Finished Fly, Frontal View. Notice the misaligned angle of the wings and how the hackle is trimmed across the bottom of the fly.



step: 29

Finished Fly, Near Side View.



step: 30

Finished Fly, Bottom View. Note how the abdomen tapers smoothly into the thorax and the splayed wings.

step: 31

Top Front View.



step: 32

Finished Fly, Far Side View. The abdomen is more visible on this side as the wing is also more upright on this side. The kink in the shank mimics the push-up posture of the natural struggling to free itself from the nymphal husk.

