



Schroeder's Parachute Hopper



Fly Patterns brought to you by Charlie's FlyBox

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step: 1

Pattern Description

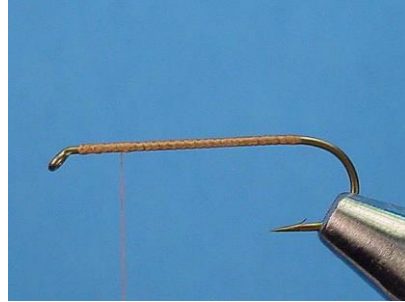
One of the most popular hopper patterns around, Schroeder's para hopper is a highly visible, buoyant fly that is also very easy to find on the water. There are a few tricks in the tying process and it can get a bit complicated with all the parts, but I think you'll find it to become one of your favorites.

Materials Needed:

Hook: TMC 5212 #6-14 Thread: 6/0 Tan Wing Post: White Calf Body or Tail Hair Hackle: Grizzly Rooster Saddle Rib: Brown Uni-Stretch Floss Abdomen: Antron Dubbing, color to match naturals Wing: Turkey Wing or Tail, pre-treated with flexible cement or spray fixative Legs: Knotted Ringneck Pheasant Tail Fibers Thorax: Antron Dubbing to match abdomen

step: 2

Attach thread at the rear edge of the index point and wrap back to the bend. Return the thread to about three eye lengths back from the hook eye.



step: 3

Cut, clean and stack a large clump of calf hair. Be sure to remove all the short fibers and stack the bunch into a nice even clump. Measure this clump of hair against the shank so it is two thirds of a shank length long. This may seem a bit long at this point, considering this is a 2xl hook, but the extra wing length will be needed later when the thorax is dubbed. The diameter of the thorax is rather large and the extra wing length will assure that the finished wing is long enough to see on the water and protrudes above the dubbed thorax far enough to allow room for the parachute hackle. Trust me.



step: 4

Tie the calf body hair in about three eye lengths back from the hook eye with a tight band of thread that travels toward the bend. That is, the band should extend from three eye lengths back from the eye to about six eye lengths back. Do not wrap forward over the wing.



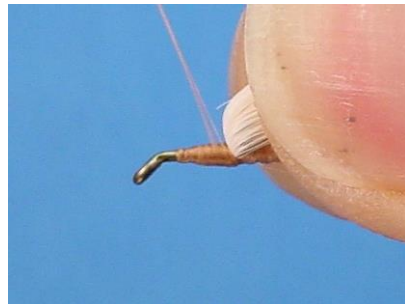
step: 5

Cut the butt ends from the calf hair at an angle and form a smooth thread base over the tapered butts.



step: 6

Grasp the entire clump of calf hair in your material hand and bring the thread in front of the base of the wing. Pull back on the wing and wrap a solid thread dam against the front edge of the wing at its base. Really wedge these wraps up tight against the wing base to prop the wing upright a ninety-degree angle to the shank.



step: 7

The wing should now look like this; propped upright.



step: 8

Hold the wing above the hook and wrap the thread around the bottom of the wing forming a thread post that is, for now, about one and a half eye lengths tall.



step: 9

Select a grizzly saddle feather that has barbs equal to about one and a half to two gap widths. Prepare the feather by stripping the butt exposing the quill for a length of about three eye lengths. Tie the hackle in by its butt end just behind the index point with the inside of the feather toward the hook. Wrap over the stripped portion of the hackle stem up to the base of the wing.



step: 10

Pull the feather up so it is lying alongside the wing. Wrap the thread around the calf hair post and stripped hackle stem up to the top of the thread post. You are tying the hackle feather to the upright wing post. Post the thread just a bit further up the wing than the original post and then work the thread back down again to the base of the wing. Make sure these wraps are tight as they are what secure the hackle feather and add rigidity to the posted wing.



step: 11

Note the extra eye length of stripped hackle stem above the thread post. This bare spot in the stem will allow you to twist the feather into alignment when we wrap it later.



step: 12

Add a drop or two of thin head cement to the base of the wing post and to the rest of the thread base while you're at it.



step: 13

Tie in a six-inch length of brown floss at the mid-point on the shank for the rib. Wrap back over the floss to the bend of the hook.



step: 14

Dub the body from the bend of the hook forward to the very back edge of the wing forming a thickly tapered body. Do not leave any space between the back of the wing and the front edge of the body; the two should be touching one another.



step: 15

Spiral wrap the ribbing six to eight turns forward over the body to the back of the wing and tie it off on top of the front edge of the dubbed body. Clip the excess floss.



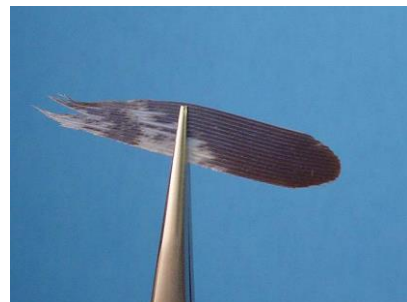
step: 16

Before coating turkey feather with cement or fixative, preen the fibers out from the quill so the fibers are straight. The fibers have a bit of natural curve to them, and if you don't straighten them out before coating, you'll have a whole feather worth of curved wings. Note the difference in alignment between the fibers on the right side of the feather (straightened) and the left (natural curve).



step: 17

Separate a slip from the quill that is not quite as wide as the hook gap and cut it from the stem. Cut the butt end of the feather into a rounded shape as shown.



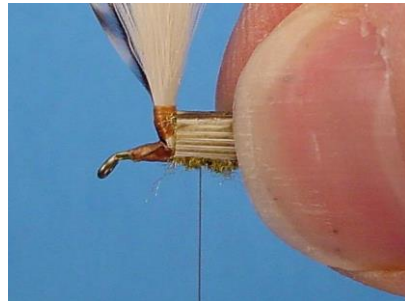
step: 18

Measure the slip against the hook shank so the rounded butt end extends about one fourth of a shank length beyond the hook bend. Cut the tip end of the slip off square at that point.



step: 19

Place the turkey slip on top of the hook at the back edge of the wing and fold it around the body slightly.



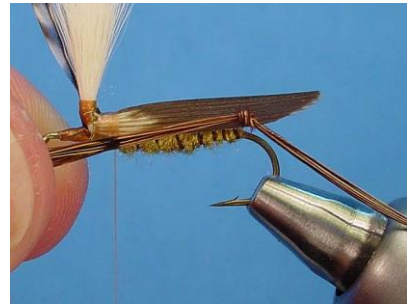
step: 20

Tie the turkey slip in at the back edge of the calf wing with several tight wraps of thread. Tying the feather in by the thinner tip section will keep the fibers from splitting when they are tied down. You can now see why we dubbed all the way up to the base of the wing, had we not, we would have had a large difference in diameter between the dubbed body and the bare shank where we need to tie in the turkey slip. The extra bulk the dubbing provides allows us to fold the feather around the shank without collapsing the profile and sets the wing on the hook at the same height as the top of the body.



step: 21

Tie an overhand knot in a small bunch of pheasant tail fibers, using a knot tool (latch hook tool), a pair of hemostats, or even your fingers, to form the legs. Make one leg from each side of the pheasant feather so you have a right and left leg. Coat the tips (lower leg portion from the knee back) with a thin layer of flexible cement to hold the fibers together. Place a pre-knotted pheasant tail leg against the hook on the near side with the 'knee' (knot) at the end of the dubbed body. I like the outside of the feather to face out from the hook, revealing the natural bands of the feather.



step: 22

Tie the leg in at the back edge of the wing with a secure band of thread.



step: 23

Repeat this process with another leg on the far side. You can adjust the angle of the legs by tugging on the butt ends in front of the thread wraps. Make the legs mirror each other with the knees at the same height and the upper leg portions at the same angle.



step: 24

Trim the butt ends of the legs flush against the shank. Trim the tip ends of the legs off leaving the remaining 'shin' about two-thirds the length of the 'thigh'.



step: 25

Dub the thread and begin wrapping the dubbing at the back edge of the index point and work back to the base of the wing. Cross to the back of the wing and continue back to the base of the turkey slip wing/legs. Make sure the thorax dubbing is equal in diameter to the abdomen.



step: 26

Continue wrapping the dubbing forward again to the back of the index point, forming a square shaped thorax.



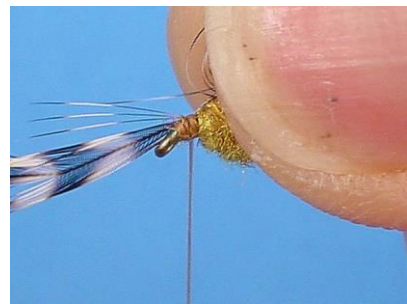
step: 27

Grasp the hackle feather in a pair of Tiemco hackle pliers and wrap it clockwise around the hook (for left-handers) or counter-clockwise for righties. The point being, to wrap the feather so it is ultimately going the same direction as the thread when it is tied off. In other words, the tip of the feather should be going away from you as you wrap it over the hook eye. Wrap the hackle feather about six to eight turns around the calf hair post.



step: 28

Pull the hackle feather, in the pliers, to the far side of the hook and let it hang there. Grasp the wrapped portion of the hackle in your material hand and hold it back away from the hook eye. Remove the pliers from the tip of the feather and tie it off with a pinch wrap.



step: 29

Release the wrapped hackle from your fingertips and clip the stub end of the hackle feather. Grasp the wrapped hackle and again, hold it away from the hook eye. Build a smooth thread head. Whip finish the thread while holding the hackle back. Clip the thread.



step: 30

Finished fly, side view. Notice the length of the turkey wing, the legs, and the parachute post. Also note the abdomen/thorax diameter.



step: 31

Finished fly, top view. Note shape of turkey wing and angle of legs.



step: 32

Finished fly, bottom view. Note smooth body taper, position of the legs and size of hackle.



