

Fly of the Month

The Snatcher



Hook :- 16- 10 grub or shrimp hook, Kamasan B100, Daiichi 1510, or similar.

Body :- Black seals fur or substitute

Rib :- Wire or tinsel

Body hackle :- Black cock or hen, palmered

Head hackle :- Cock or hen

Cheeks :- Jungle cock or goose biot tips, colour of your choice.

The Snatcher was originally devised in the mid 1990s by a David Wallace for use on Loch Leven and is said to suggest the large emerging buzzers they have there. Since then it has become a popular still water fly around the world including, I am told, Western Australia. The basic pattern remains the same but it has been ‘developed’ over the years and now comes in a vast range of colours and materials. But what makes the Snatcher the Snatcher is the curved hook and palmered body. David Wallace’s original did not have the cheeks but just about all variants you see these days do.

The fly is started by attaching the tying thread just behind the eye and laying a base right back to and round the bend, where you attach the ribbing tinsel or wire. Dub the thread with your body material and make a nice slim body by winding it forward to just back from the eye, leaving room for the front hackle. Attach the body hackle, which should have fibres shorter than the hook gape and, using hackle pliers, wind it back down the body to where the ribbing material is attached. Let the hackle hang by the weight of the hackle pliers and then secure it with the ribbing wire or tinsel. (It sometimes helps when securing the hackle with the ribbing to adjust the position of the hook in the vice so that the bend is on top and the hackle pliers don’t pull the hackle feather down round the bend.) Wind the ribbing through the hackle and tie it off at the front of the body. Don’t forget to snip off the spare hackle hanging back at the bend. Attach your front hackle, which should have fibres a bit wider than the hook gape, and make three or four turns before tying it off. Next attach a piece of goose biot each side to slope back roughly parallel with the shank and build up a nice head with your tying thread before tying it off. Jungle cock cheeks look good but the feathers are hard to come by and expensive.

Snatchers are usually fished subsurface where the curved hook makes a nice movement through the water on the retrieve. Conventional wisdom is that brighter versions are good for rainbow trout and duller for browns.

As mentioned above there are many variations on the Snatcher theme and many well known patterns have a Snatcher version. There’s a Doobry Snatcher, a Kate McClaren Snatcher, a Viva Snatcher, a Bibio Snatcher, etc. etc. But they don’t qualify as Snatchers unless they have that curved hook and palmered body hackle.



Alan T.

