

The Fastwater Dun



Hook :- Kamasan B160, size 10-16

Thread :- Uni-thread 6/0, Black or Brown

Tail :- Three CDC feathers

Body :- Natural hare's ear, seal's fur or possum tail dubbing

Wing :- Deer hair

I first came across this fairly bland looking fly via Daniel Hackett's Fly Tying Cards about 6 years ago. It's deer hair wing creates a quite buoyant fly, perfect for hanging a weighted nymph when fishing fast flowing riffles and runs. I found it useful when using either larger nymphs, #12's or even #10's, or those weighted with tungsten beads, where the bigger weight tended to pull down a Royal Wulff or Parachute Adams. Of course, it was also very successful just fished as a dry, and soon became the initial dry fly I'd tie on streamside.

Aside from the aforementioned deer hair wing, the materials number only a dubbed body and a tail of Cul de Canard feathers (CDC). These feathers, from near the preen glands of ducks and other waterfowl are known for their natural buoyancy.

Used on rivers or small streams, it imitates a caddis moth quite well and has seen success for me particularly on the St Pats, North Esk and Mersey Rivers. More recently this season, it has also proved deadly fished in the 19 lagoons. At the Club's outing at Tiger Hut in January, it accounted for all of the fish I landed. The biggest, four and a half pounds from Carter Lakes.

Tying the fly is reasonably straight forward. It can be tied on a standard dry fly hook, although I have a preference for using a short shank, wide gape hook similar to the Kamasan B160. I'm a fan of wide gape hooks when tying with deer hair. After laying a base of black or brown thread (Uni-thread 6/0), I tie in the tips of 3 overlapped, similar sized CDC feathers at the point of the bend in the hook. They should be about half the hook shank in length. I err on the side of being short rather than too long.

The material for the dubbed body can vary. Originally it was tied with a natural hare's ear. I tie variations now with claret, brown or blue seal's fur, possum tail or a blend of possum and UV sensitive synthetic dubbing in peacock, olive, red or orange. The brighter colours seem to work better on a dull day or when fishing faster, unclear water, with the UV dubbing seemingly acting as an attractor. On a blue sky day on a lake, the natural coloured body works better. The body should be reasonably thin and even in width and height. The flotation for this fly comes mainly from the wing which is why you keep the body slim and consistently wrapped. Too much dubbing can cause the fly to not sit correctly in the water or even sink. Dub the body from the tail, to just before the eye of the hook.

The tie in point for the wing is a third of the shank away from the hook eye. This enables the trimmed head to finish up just before the eye. Tying with deer hair can be tricky, particularly in regards to getting the quantities right. Too much hair and the clump will spin around the hook. Too little and the fly won't float properly. Cut a clump of hair that should be about 5 mm thick when pressed together and stack the hair, tip first. Remove any under fur and broken hairs before

stacking. The length of the wing should line up equal with the end of the tail. Measure this distance off and tie the wing in at the top of the hook. Start with a couple of loose wraps to hold the deer hair in place. Then carefully do 3 or 4 tighter wraps. These wraps are what will cause the wing to flare and provide some width to aid in the imitation of the natural caddis profile as well as help the fly sit upright in the water. Don't go too tight on the wraps or you may break the thread or cut the deer hair. Wrap another couple of turns of thread in front of the main wraps to keep the head in place and tie off the thread. Where possible, with a single cut, trim the butts of the deer hair to form the head.

There you go, a fly that looks buggy, will float all day and that has a proven record of success.

Stephen Hill



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