

September Fly of the Month ... The Woolly Bugger



Hook :- Wet fly 6-8-10-12 standard or long shank

Thread :- 6/0 colour to suit

Tail :- Large bunch of marabou, length of hook

Body :- Chenille, most popular colours are black and olive.

Rib :- Silver or gold wire or tinsel

Hackle :- Palmered black cock or hen saddle feather

The woolly bugger is arguably Tasmania's, and possibly the world's, most popular wet fly. After more than two years of Fly of the Month it's about time it was featured here. The woolly bugger is said to have originated in Pennsylvania in the late 1960s as a development of the woolly worm. Nowadays it is widely used in lakes and rivers and, in larger sizes, is popular in salt water.

Tying is fairly straightforward. Start the thread at the eye and take it back to the bend where a large bunch of marabou equal to the length of the hook is tied in. Next tie in the ribbing wire or tinsel, the hackle by its tip followed by the chenille, in that order. Take the thread forward to the eye of the hook and then wind the chenille forward and tie it off. The body hackle is then wound forward over the chenille and secured. I prefer hen feathers for the extra movement they have in the water as the fly is retrieved. (A couple of extra turns of the hackle before tying off looks good.) The ribbing wire or tinsel is then wound forward through the body hackle and tied off. Build up a head of thread, apply head cement and the fly is finished.

Adding a bead head is popular and the fly can also be weighted with lead wire under the chenille. Other variations include the addition of a few strands of flash or bright orange chenille in the tail.

A.T.