

Fly of the Month

The Fuzzy Wuzzy



Hook :- Wet fly 10-8-6

Tail :- Black dyed squirrel tail

Body :- Red chenille

Hackles :- Black hen or cock

Ask most Tasmanian fly fishers to name their favourite wet fly and the answer is likely to be either the Woolly Bugger or the Mrs Simpson. Your editor, with his Western Australian introduction to fly fishing, much prefers the Fuzzy Wuzzy. It is popular in WA, where the instructions are to fish it slow and deep, because the waters there have a population of marron, the delicious native crayfish. And the koura is the native New Zealand crayfish that the Fuzzy Wuzzy was originally tied to resemble back in the 1930s. Having said that, the 'fuzzy' is also a good general purpose searching wet fly that just looks like it might be food to the trout. Likewise the Woolly Bugger, but I prefer the fuzzy because it's not prone to the tail wrapping itself round the bend of the hook.....you don't have to keep checking the fly to make sure it is still swimming straight.

The Fuzzy Wuzzy is not hard to tie. Take the foundation thread from eye back to the bend and tie in a bunch of black squirrel tail fibres of approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ shank length. Then attach your red chenille. To avoid having a lump at the tie in point it's best to strip a few millimetres of the chenille back to the core before attaching it. Wind the chenille forward a couple of turns and secure it. Avoid the temptation to make too many turns otherwise you run out of room later on and crowd the eye. Next attach the black hackle. The original dressing called for black cock hackle but most tyers these days prefer hen hackle for the extra pulsing movement as the fly is retrieved. Three or four turns of quality hackle is all that is needed and then tie that off using the turns of thread to make the hackle slope backwards. Repeat the process with another few turns of chenille and another hackle. Finish off by building a fairly large head with your tying thread.

Variations to the original are common. On long shank hooks you could have three hackles. Different colours of chenille can be used and you can even use two different colours. One of my favourites is bright yellow for the rear half and black at the front. They can also be weighted with lead wire or a bead head for use in deeper water. And all-black Fuzzy Wuzzies can be deadly after dark or on shallow, weedy waters such as Bruisers Lagoon.



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