

July Fly of the Month ... The Matuka

The club has a proposed outing planned in September to the Derwent River to fish for sea run trout. For that we will need some bait pattern flies and one of the most popular of those is the matuka. The matuka is another New Zealand fly dating from the 1880s and was originally tied with the feathers from the local bittern, or matuka in the Maori language. The feathers of the matuka are brown and were used because one of the local baitfish, the koaro, is predominantly that colour. These days the matuka is just a style of tying and the variations number in the hundreds.

Hook :- Long shank 10- 6
Thread :- Black, Unithread 6
Body :- Chenille or wool,
colour of choice
Rib :- Silver wire
Wing :- Pair of matched black
saddle feathers
Hackle :- Beard hackle of
black hackle fibres



The basic matuka is tied by starting the thread at the eye and taking it back to the bend where you tie in the silver rib and the body material. Take the thread back to just behind the eye and then wind the body material forward and tie it down leaving the thread hanging. Leave room behind the eye for what will be a rather large head wrap. Next select a pair of saddle hackle feathers, marry them and size them by holding them over the shank of the hook so that the tips of the feathers extend about a hook length past the bend. Then strip off the bottom part of the feathers that are along the shank of the hook, lay the feathers along the hook shank and tie them in just behind the eye with the thread you previously left hanging. Next step is to bind the wing to the shank of the hook by winding the silver wire forward through the wing in four or five turns to where the body material is tied in and secure it with the thread that should still be hanging there. All that's left is to rotate the fly in the vice and tie in a beard hackle of black fibres and build up a head of thread. Varnish the head and the fly is finished. The matuka can be weighted with a bead or by a wrap of lead wire under the body material. The tying is a bit complicated in words but not in practice so let's make it the fly for our next flytying evening.