

Fly of the Month

The Cruncher



Hook :- Standard wet fly or nymph 10-12-14

Thread :- Black or brown

Tail :- Light brown or furnace hen fibres

Body :- Two pheasant tail fibres

Rib :- Fine red or copper wire

Thorax :- Peacock herl

Hackle :- Light brown or furnace hen feather

The Cruncher is nowadays one of the most used flies in still water fishing in the UK and, as Donald pointed out at the September meeting, is virtually unheard of in Australia. It appears to have started life as a variant of the ever popular pheasant tail nymph but has now become standardised as a fly in its own right. As with most popular flies the variations are numerous but the accepted basic pattern is pictured above.

Tying the Cruncher is quite straightforward. Lay the foundation thread from eye to bend in the usual way and tie in the tail fibres which should be almost the shank length. Next tie in wire ribbing and two pheasant tail fibres trying not to make the tie down point too bulky. Advance the thread to a point about one third shank length from the eye and then wind the pheasant tail fibres forward to that point, tie down and trim. The rib is then wound forward in the opposite direction and tied down in the same position as the body fibres. Next catch in two peacock herls and make two or three turns to form a nice bushy thorax. The hackle feather is then tied in and given two or three turns ... the fibres should be the length of the body. Build up a fairly large head with the tying thread, apply head cement and the fly is finished. One of the more popular variations is to use bright red, yellow or chartreuse thread for the head.

The Cruncher is generally fished on a floating or intermediate line with a slow figure of eight retrieve and often in tandem with a Diawl Bach on a dropper.

A.T.