

Olive and Red Chironomid Larvae

Sunriver Angler's Fly Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer



Early season in Central Oregon is Chironomid time on our many Stillwater fisheries. For this month's pattern, I have opted for a very easy to tie Chironomid pattern that imitates the larvae form of Chironomids found in our local waters.

The genesis of this pattern was from watching a short video in Phil Rowley's presentation to the Sunriver Anglers last year. He showed Chironomids wiggling in a small vial. What caught my eye was the olive color of these larvae, along with the reddish hemoglobin throughout the body of this insect. I tied up a very simple Chironomid pattern to imitate this stage of the insect and it has turned out to be a very effective pattern on Crane Prairie, East, Diamond and others during Chironomid time.

I like to fish this pattern about 12-18" off the bottom. I set up a strike indicator to suspend my fly to near the water depth. This distance will vary depending on depth in the location you are fishing. A good fish finder can help you determine water depth. Alternatively, clip your forceps onto the hook and lower it into the water until it touches bottom. Your indicator should be pulled about a foot under the surface when the forceps reaches the bottom.

Many fishermen opt to cast out an indicator set-up and let it sit until they see a fish pull the indicator under the water. But to do so will result in missing many, many undetected strikes. A fish may pick up the fly and not impact the indicator at all. To better detect these strikes, generate a long slow 30" pull on the fly line every 15 to 30 seconds. The fly will lift on the strip and settle on the stop. In addition to enabling detection of strikes, a moving fly is more apt to attract attention and result in more strikes. Strikes can be obvious, with the indicator being pulled under the surface. But more often, strikes are subtle. If you see anything unusual in the indicator's action, strike! Often a take will be as subtle as the difference between your indicator riding over the waves, to the indicator riding through the waves indicating a take.

Give this pattern a try next time you visit your favorite lake during Chironomid time.

Pattern Recipe:

Hook: Tiemco 200R or Daiichi 1260 Size 10-16

Bead: White bead to match hook size

Thread: 210 Denier Red and 70 Denier Olive thread

Overwrap: Clear Liquid Lace in size Midge or Clear Cure Goo

Tying Instructions:

1. Place the bead on the hook and set into your vice.
2. Tie on the Liquid Lace at the rear of the bead with red thread. Wind it back to the tail set position just above the barb of the hook. Wind several more layers of red thread over the hook to build a tapered body. For small hooks, tie 2 layers of thread. For large hooks, tie as many as 5-6 layers of thread. The body of the fly should be sparse. Whip finish the red thread just behind the bead and trim the thread off the fly.
3. Tie on the olive thread just behind the bead. Wind variegated wraps back to an 1/8" of the tail set position, leaving a tag of red. Wind the olive thread forward to the bead using variegated wraps. Some of the red thread should show through the olive thread representing the hemoglobin in the fly.
4. Wind the Liquid Lace forward in consecutive wraps from the tail set position to the bead. Tie off with the olive thread and whip finish.
5. Coat the fly with ***Sally Hanson's Hard as Nails*** clear nail polish. Let dry and get ready to fish!
6. An alternative to using Liquid Lace is to use Clear Cure Goo. Clear Cure Goo is an alternative to epoxy that is cured very quickly using a UV light. Gently squeeze Clear Cure Goo over the fly and spread evenly. Activate using a UV light to cure the material. This product is available in our local Sunriver Fly Shops.