

Pull-over Callibaetis Spinner

Sunriver Angler's Fly Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer

Callibaetis mayfly hatches are beginning this month and will last through the summer and into early fall. The Callibaetis hatch is unquestionably the most important mayfly hatch on the Cascade Lakes in Central Oregon. Trout key on the nymph stage prior to the hatch, the emerger stage during the hatch, the dun stage on the surface, and spinners returning to lay eggs to begin the cycle anew. Fishing techniques for this insect vary, from nymphs fished beneath an indicator, to wind drifted or stripped, to fishing dun and spinner patterns on the surface. Hatches usually occur in the later morning and extend into the afternoon on many days. To extend your fishing day, stock up on various stages of this insect to cover the hatch thoroughly. For this month's pattern, I have chosen a favorite fly for imitating the spinner stage of this insect; the Pull-over Callibaetis Spinner. Because the spinner stage is often on the surface at the same time as the dun, I will fish this pattern in tandem with cripples or dun imitations to give myself a better chance of success.



Callibaetis Spinner

Many of my most memorable dry fly fishing days have occurred during the Callibaetis Hatch. One day on Hosmer Lake, I float-tubed one of my favorite areas and began casting wooly buggers with a trailing Callibaetis mayfly nymph pattern. Before long I saw the familiar sight of a large, probably size 12, Callibaetis mayfly on the surface of the lake. Just as quickly, this mayfly disappeared into the swirl of a rising Atlantic salmon. Soon I saw another rise, and another, many of which were consumed by the Atlantics feeding ravenously so soon after ice out. It didn't take too many rises for me to abandon the wooly bugger and nymph for a dry line and Callibaetis pattern. My presentations were greeted eagerly by the rising Atlantics and I

brought several of these magnificent fish to net. But the really awesome part of the day, and the event that made it so memorable was the Bald Eagle I saw land in a tree nearby where I was fishing. He watched over the scene of feeding Atlantics, and I stared at the beauty of this bird. Soon I returned to fishing and the rise forms continuing on the water in front of me. On one of my casts, I laid down the line on the water, and was startled by a loud splash over my shoulder. I quickly turned my gaze toward the splash and saw the eagle, now with an Atlantic Salmon in its talons, fly over my head no more than 20 feet high. As he was passing by, I felt the line on the rod tighten with my own hook-up of an Atlantic. It was truly one of those “it doesn’t get any better than this” moments. And it forever etched the Callibaetis mayfly hatches as one of my favorites.

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While this pattern gives the impression that the fly could use a haircut, when viewed from the trout’s perspective, from underneath the surface, it is an excellent imitation for the Callibaetis Spinner.

Pattern Recipe:

- Hook:** Tiemco 100 or Daiichi 1180, sizes 12-18
- Thread:** Tan or Tobacco Brown Danville 70 Denier (6/0)
- Tail:** Brown or Dun Micro-fibbets
- Abdomen:** Wild Turkey Biot from the leading edge of the flight feathers
- Thorax:** Light tan or Olive dubbing (75%) blended with olive ice dubbing (25%)
- Post:** 4X Tippet
- Hackle/Wing:** Whiting Farms Dun Grizzly tied Pullover style

Tying Instructions:

1. Tie four micro-fibbet fibers for the tail (length should be 2 - 2 ½ times the hook gape). Manually split the tail pushing two fibers to the far side of the hook and two to the near side of the hook. I prefer to split the tail further with a single wrap of thread tied in between the fibbets. In order to make this technique work effectively, it is necessary to spin the thread on the bobbin until is wound fairly tightly to create body and structure in the thread. Now take one wind of thread through the split fibbets and forward at a 45 degree angle. To lock the tail in place, take an additional wrap in front of the tail and one wrap under the tail.
2. Tie in a turkey biot by the tip. The translucent side of the biot should be positioned forward, and the opaque side should be back. Lightly glue the abdomen before winding the biot. Wind the biot forward to the 2/3's point of the hook with 5-7 wraps, creating a nice segmented effect on the abdomen.
3. Prepare a hackle feather by stripping the barbs from the feather up to the point where no more than 1/4 of the barb is web. With the shiny side of the feather facing you, strip several more barbs from the side of the feather (1/8th of an inch or less) that will rest against the wing on the first wrap to help insure that the barbs set properly. I prefer the longer Whiting Farms Dry Fly Saddles in the right size, as they are easier to handle and can tie multiple flies from the same feather.
4. Tie in a 4-5 inch piece of 4X Tippet starting the tie-in at the rear of the head, and extending back through the thorax. Wraps should be firm to ensure the material won't slip when executing the pullover with the hackle.
5. Pull the loop upward at a 90 degree angle to the hook shank with your index finger. Wind the hackle around the loop of monofilament tippet about 5-6 turns progressing up the loop, and 5-6 wraps down the loop to bring the hackle back down to the hook. Tie off the hackle and trim the excess.
6. Spin dubbing material onto the thread and wind forward through the thorax.
7. Gently lift the tippet loop at a 90 degree angle from the hook and stroke the hackle fibers to the back of the hook. Hold the final stroke between your fingers and gently pull the tippet loop forward to the head and tie off, being careful to not catch any hackle fibers. Wind 5-6 wraps of thread over the tippet. Gently pull the tippet tight to condense the hackle fibers over the top of the thorax. Clip off the excess tippet and whip finish the head. Lightly glue the head to complete the fly.