



Sunriver Angler's Fly Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer



The Soft Hackle October Caddis is a fly I learned many years ago during a very late-night fly tying jam with Andy Puyans, my fly tying mentor. I first used this pattern for the notoriously finicky trout in California's Hat Creek. I was on a steep fly fishing learning curve in those days and this pattern helped me solve the mystery to catch several nice trout that day. The natural October Caddis is an honest size 8-10. It hatches during its namesake month, but is available as larvae throughout the season. It is a caddis that builds a case and spends most of its life on the bottom of rivers inside its case. However, it is also prone to behavioral drifts when it leaves its case and drifts with the current until it builds a new and larger case. It is especially susceptible to feeding trout during these times, which occur usually later afternoon during June and July. But I have found a drifted Soft Hackle pattern can work well at any time of year; it is a large meal for the trout.

The original pattern used slightly different materials, as I have made updates using a variety of materials not available back then. But the main concept is still the same. I

have used a dubbing for the abdomen that has elements of flash and pearlescent flash ribbing that can give an impression of air bubbles in the natural. Also, I have added CDC to the underwing of this pattern to capture air bubbles, much like the natural. In the example, I tie this with a tungsten bead and a few wraps of lead wire to get the pattern down quickly. But I also fish it lightly weighted, depending on the depth of water I am fishing.



Natural October Caddis Adult

I like this pattern for both trout and steelhead. I've fished it on many trout rivers, such as the McCloud and Upper Sacramento in Northern California. But also for Steelhead on the Trinity and Lower Deschutes. I use two primary techniques: Tight-line nymphing, or casting and drifting the fly dead drifted under an indicator. Both methods work. But I also pick up quite a few fish by swinging the fly at the tail end of the drift. I have always remembered those lessons the trout on Hat Creek taught me and still go back to this pattern every Fall as October Caddis time approaches.

Soft Hackle October Caddis Materials List:

Hook: Daiichi 1260, Size 8-10

Thread: Veevus 14/0 Black

Bead: Canadian Llama 7/64 Black Tungsten

Additional Weight: .025" Lead Wire

Abdomen: Spirit River Brite Blend Polar Orange

Rib: Pearlescent Flat Flash - Small

Wing Pads: Natural Turkey

CDC: TroutHunter Dark Pardo

Hackle: Whiting Farms Brahma Hen – Natural Brown

Horns: Ringneck Pheasant Tail Barbs

Thorax: Peacock Herl

Tying instructions and steps are being published in video form, and can be found on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SunriverAnglers/>, or at the following YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/kmh4W-ELoXg>

Learn to tie this fly pattern and fish it in rivers which feature October Caddis, such as the Lower Deschutes. If you have questions or would like additional information about the October Caddis Soft Hackle, please don't hesitate to email me. Or if you have suggestions on future patterns to feature in this column, I welcome your input. I can be reached at <mailto:philfischer@sbcglobal.net>.