

Pale Morning Dun CDC Thorax

Sunriver Angler's Fly Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer



This month's pattern features a Pale Morning Dun Parachute pattern. September brings a change of season in Central Oregon. This means cooler weather, sometimes unsettled conditions, and a prolific Pale Morning Dun hatch on the Crooked River. There is nothing better than casting a 3-weight rod to rainbows taking Pale Morning Dun Mayflies of the surface of the Crooked River. This pattern also works well on the Fall River, Metolious Upper Deschutes and other rivers during their PMD hatches, which occur earlier in the year than on the Crooked. But PMD's on the Crooked in September and early October can be amazing. It is a whole lot of fun to stand in one spot and cast to a specific fish until hooked, then move along to the next fish, and next, and next, never stepping from the very same spot. I have had days where I spend most of the time within a 100-yard stretch of river and can cast to rising fish throughout the 3 to 4-hour hatch period. The best hatches occur on overcast days with moderate humidity in the air.

The Pale Morning Dun Parachute pattern is tied with a unique blend of materials that help make this pattern especially effective on the Crooked River. It is tied on a Firehole 419 Hook, which is a barbless competition hook. It features a wide gape that allows me to tie a very small fly that has the advantage of the hooking capabilities of a larger hook. I tie this fly in a standard parachute style with a wing that is Zelon, which helps durability; catching many fish on the same fly can be common on the Crooked. So, durability is a good trait. I used a dyed pale-yellow

goose biot for the abdomen, which creates a nicely segmented and very sparse body. Rather than the more traditional leading edge, I used a barb from the trailing edge of the goose's flight feather, as it enables more and tighter wraps to form the insect's segments. I use a unique method to split the microfibers in the tail. Watch closely in the video and follow the steps precisely. I also use Cul De Canard feathers (CDC) in the dubbed thorax of this pattern. CDC feathers come from right around the oil gland on waterfowl, and the feather is saturated with natural oils, and it repels water extraordinarily well. This makes it a perfect material for dry flies in the riffles and runs on the Crooked River. CDC can become saturated after hooking a fish but can be easily refreshed with some dry shake and a little CDC oil. I bought a small bottle of CDC Oil many years ago from the Trout Hunter Fly Shop in Island Park Idaho. It has lasted me a long time. The hackle is a Whiting Dry Fly Saddle Hackle and is tied parachute style to enable it to ride low in the water, much like the natural.



Natural Pale Morning Dun Mayfly

This pattern has worked well for me on many rivers over time. It can be tied to imitate the Pale Morning Dun, or other mayflies by substituting materials to match the natural. I often tie it to imitate a Blue Wing Olive Dun for this hatch during October on the Fall River. Give this pattern a try; I think you'll like the results.

Pale Morning Dun Parachute Materials List

Hook: Firehole 419 Barbless Dry Fly Hook, Size 18

Thread: Veevus 16/0 Pale Yellow

Wing: Blue Ribbon Flies Zelon, Light Dun
Tail: Micro-fibbets, Light Dun
Abdomen: Spirit River Turkey Biot, Pale Yellow
Thorax: Trout Hunter Premium CDC, Pale Yellow
Hackle: Whiting Dry Fly Saddle, Light Dun

Tying instructions and steps are being published in video form, and can be found on the page at:

Sunriver Anglers Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/SunriverAnglers/>

YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/oKjeO3O8p1Y>

Learn to tie this fly pattern and grab your 3-weight rod and head to the Crooked River this month to fish the Pale Morning Dun hatch. You won't be disappointed. If you have questions or would like additional information about the Pale Morning Dun Parachute fly pattern, 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 Philfischer@sbcglobal.net.