

Glass Bead Olive Soft Hackle

Sunriver Angler's Fly Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer



The Olive Soft Hackle is a pattern I like to fish on the Crooked or Fall rivers during Blue Wing Olive hatch periods. I also like this pattern on the Crooked River during the Mother's Day hatch in Spring. I vary the size from 14-18 depending on the natural I am trying to imitate. Both insects are important in the early season on our local rivers. A soft hackle is fished sub-surface and drifted through the runs. I like to let it swing at the tail end of the drift. As the fly swings, it rises in the current imitating emerging mayfly and caddis, and it is during this rise that trout find soft hackles irresistible. But be careful; fishing these flies can become addictive!

This pattern is designed with some key materials to make the fly more effective. I use a touch of Peacock Ice Dub blended with Jay Fair's Seal Sub dubbing. This gives the thorax just a slight amount of flash, which imitates air bubbles on emerging mayflies and caddisflies. Secondly, embedded into the thorax is a glass bead. The bead has a dual purpose in this pattern: It adds just a touch of weight to help the fly sink slightly. If I wanted the fly to sink more quickly, I would substitute a tungsten or brass bead. But most often, I want the fly to sink softly, and swing at the tail end of the drift, so a light

weight glass bead is preferred. As important, the bead helps maintain the profile of the partridge hackle. I tie the hackle right in front of the bead and this keeps the hackle splayed out and full in the water, giving lifelike movement and profile. Most fly shops or craft stores stock a selection of beads that work in fly tying. These I might have pilfered from my wife's bead making supplies. But don't tell her. She doesn't know! Lastly, the hook I've chosen for this fly is a Klinkhammer style hook with a straight eye and curved hook shank. It is a barbless hook that is a lot gentler on the fish.

Give this pattern a try next time you sit down at your vice to tie a few flies. Blue Wing Olive hatches and the Mother's Day hatch are not far off.

Olive Soft Hackle Materials List:

Hook: Firehole 315 or 317, Size 14-18

Thread: Veevus 14/0 Denier Olive Thread

Abdomen: Spirit River Olive Goose Biot

Thorax: 75% Olive Seal Sub Dubbing and 25% Peacock Ice Dubbing

Bead: Small Glass Seed Bead - Clear

Hackle: Hungarian Partidge

Tying instructions and steps are being published in video form, and can be found on the Sunriver Anglers Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SunriverAnglers/>, or at the following YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/bm2SbHOITa8>

Learn to tie this fly pattern and fish it in rivers or lakes to imitate emerging mayflies, or the caddis flies on the Fall or Crooked Rivers. If you have questions or would like additional information about the Glass Bead Olive Soft Hackle 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.