

Composite Loop Callibaetis Soft Hackle

Sunriver Angler's Fly-Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer



In mid-winter I dream of being on East Lake or Hosmer fly fishing with Callibaetis mayflies. But since the lakes are currently frozen over, this time of year my dreams are most vivid while at my vice tying up patterns for next summer. Today found me tying a favorite Callibaetis pattern for casting and stripping or wind drifting the lakes; the Composite Loop Callibaetis Soft Hackle.

East Lake is well known for its long Callibaetis hatch starting in late May and extending through September. The weed beds throughout the lake makes for prime habitat for Callibaetis mayflies. Cruising rainbows, browns, and even kokanee salmon take this pattern willingly. My preferred method of fishing this fly is to float tube along the weed beds casting into the weed bed and slowly stripping the fly back. I rarely fish this fly singly, often preferring to fish in tandem with a wooly bugger, or other pattern. I find the larger size of the wooly bugger attracts fish, but 80-90% of the time the fish takes the smaller Callibaetis. Alternatively, I often fish this pattern under a strike indicator in lakes, and perform a slow hand weave, or a long slow pull to lift the fly and then let it settle in between pulls. Lastly, I also wind drift with this pattern with an intermediate sink line. This pattern works well in advance of the Callibaetis Mayfly emergence. But I use it any time during the day on lakes where Callibaetis mayflies are prolific.

The tying video for this pattern introduces some new tools I've recently begun using for tying flies using a dubbing loop. The composite loop comprises multiple types of

materials within a dubbing loop blended to form a composite material, in this case the soft hackle utilizing a Whiting hen saddle hackle and CDC. The technique uses a Swiss CDC Clamp which I obtained recently from the Hook Fly Shop in Sunriver, and a Loon Dubbing Spinner. These tools make spinning materials in a dubbing loop much easier than the former methods I employed. And it creates endless alternatives for marrying materials in composite loops, only limited by the fly tiers imagination. Look at the video to see for yourself (Link below).

Materials List:

Hook: Firehole 718, Size 14-16
Thread: Danville 6/0 Flat Waxed, Tobacco Brown
Tail: Natural Lemon Wood Dusk Flank Feather
Abdomen: Zelon Dubbing – Hydropsche Tan
Thorax: 75% Superfine – Callibaetis, and 25% UV Ice Dub - Callibaetis
Hackle: Whiting Freshwater Streamer, Mottled Grey
CDC, Dark Pardo

Tying instructions and steps are 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/hQ9HGBC_MSw.

Experiment with this the composite dubbing loop technique to build your own creative patterns. If you have questions or would like additional information about Composite Loop Callibaetis 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 Philfischer@sbcglobal.net.