

Red Quill

Sunriver Angler's Fly-Tying Corner

By: *Phil Fischer*



For this month's fly pattern, I pulled out my old tattered *McClane's Fishing Encyclopedia and International Angling Guide*. This book has been on my bookshelf since my formative years in fly tying in the 1960's; it was published in 1965. In the center of this book there are several pages that contain pictures and recipe's for popular fly patterns. Since I began my fly-tying passion some 50 years ago, I have visited the glossy photos in the center of this book many times. It was on these pages that I was introduced to Catskill Fly Patterns. These patterns were created over time to fish the tumbling streams and waters in the Catskill Mountains in the Eastern United States beginning in the late 1800's. The patterns range from the quintessential Quill Gordon, to the Hendrickson, Light Cahill and many more. The patterns were originally designed to imitate mayflies common in the region and are still tied and in widespread use today. My eyes rested on the Red Quill, a pattern that imitates brown colored mayflies, like the March Brown and Mahogany mayflies common in Oregon's Fall, Metolious and Deschutes rivers. For this month's Fly-Tying Corner article, I decided to honor Catskill patterns with my rendition of the Red Quill.

The Red Quill follows the design of the original Quill Gordon closely. The original pattern was tied with a stripped brown hackle feather for the abdomen of the fly. And the

original featured a dun hackle for both the tail and hackle on this time-honored pattern. I followed closely the Catskill tying style for the Red Quill but made a couple subtle changes to match the March Brown and Mahogany mayflies that hatch in the Spring and Fall, respectively, on our local rivers. I used a Whiting Coq de Leon hackle fiber for the tail, dyed burnt orange. I also used a stripped peacock eye barb dyed brown for the abdomen. Lastly, the hackle is a Whiting dry fly saddle feather dyed brown. The wing features a lemon wood duck flank feather tied in a rolled wing style mirroring the original patterns that have become a mainstay of the traditional Catskill dry fly patterns.

The Catskill patterns were popularized throughout the first half of the 20th century by many legendary fly fisherman and tiers, including Preston Jennings, Ernest Scheibert, Ray Berman and Art Flick. The legacy of the Catskill fly patterns includes many flies, such as Atherton # 6, Beaverkill Red Fox, March Brown, Quill Gordon, amongst others. The traditional patterns are captured in glossy full color on the pages of the McClane's Fishing Encyclopedia. Take a walk through the history of fly tying by tying your own Red Quill and fishing it on a Central Oregon river next Spring during the March Brown hatch.

Red Quill Materials List:

Hook:	Firehole 419 Size 14-18
Thread:	Veevus Black 16/0
Wing:	Natural Lemon Wood Dusk Flank Feather
Tail:	Whiting Coq De Leon Dyed Burnt Orange or Fiery Brown
Abdomen:	Polish Quill Dyed Brown
Hackle:	Whiting Dry Fly Saddle Dyed Brown

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/j0g0By7ksEY>

Experiment with this pattern, or other traditional Catskill dry flies, on Central Oregon's Rivers. Or just enjoy the beauty and tradition that comes with tying some of these classics. If you have questions or would like additional information about Catskill patterns, 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.