

Chubby Chernobyl Ant

Sunriver Angler's Fly Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer



My foray fishing the Chubby began as a stealthier approach to indicator fishing. That big fluorescent orange strike indicator over gin clear water is often a dead give-away to trout that your dropper fly should be avoided. But with a more natural looking fly like the Chubby Chernobyl Ant as the indicator, trout are often not aware of the deception. That was my philosophy, anyway. Imagine my surprise when a big head rose and took the Chubby during the first test drive. I almost missed the strike, dumbfounded that the trout didn't take the intended dropper fly. A little while later, another fish took the Chubby and it dawned on me that I was onto something.

The Chernobyl Ant was originated by a group of guides for fishing Utah's Green River. Over time, many different versions emerged and sooner or later, wings were affixed to the fly to become what is now known as the Chubby Chernobyl Ant. The white wings make the fly very easy to see, even from a significant distance. The fly is a great imitation for many bugs surrounding our local Central Oregon lakes and rivers. Tied in tan colors, it is an excellent imitation for hoppers. Tied in a salmon orange or golden color, it imitates salmon flies and golden stoneflies. Yet, tied in black with hints of subtle olive flash, it is an excellent imitation for big ants, and beetles, which are common in our local lodgepole forests. For this month's pattern, I strayed towards ants and beetles, as late summer and early fall these insects are very prevalent on our waters.

I fish this pattern often as the strike indicator, and using a dropper fly underneath. This is a deadly technique on Crane Prairie and East Lake. The fly is very buoyant, yet less so than a big orange Styrofoam indicator. When a fish takes the dropper, the Chubby slips under the water's surface easily, and the trout tend to hold on just a touch longer than with a more commonly used Styrofoam indicators. That is a big plus on those days when my reaction time is a bit delayed due to a distraction, like a bald eagle flying by! Plus, an added benefit occurs when a fish takes the Chubby indicator and gets hooked. I have had trout take Styrofoam indicators many times but have never hooked one. Give this pattern a try. I think it will become a fixture in your fly box.

Chubby Chernobyl Ant Materials List:

Hook: Firehole 718, Size 4 - 16

Thread: Ultra 140 Denier, Black

Flash: Krystal Flash, Olive

Body: 75% Black Angora Dubbing
25% Ice Dub, Olive

Foam: 2 MM Foam, Black

Legs: Crazy Legs, Grizzly Olive Flake

Wings: Enrico Puglisi EP Fibers, White

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/MIY8vxypQys> Experiment with this pattern on our local lakes and rivers throughout the summer and fall. If you have questions or would like additional information about the Chubby Chernobyl Ant pattern, please do not 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.