

Denny's Stillwater Nymph

Sunriver Angler's Fly Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer



For this month's pattern, I chose to pay tribute to one of the legendary stillwater fly fisherman, Denny Rickards. Denny is well known in fly fishing circles as an innovative fly tyer and fly fisherman. He makes his home in Southern Oregon and is very well acquainted with Oregon Stillwater's. His Stillwater Nymph pattern was designed to fool those large, difficult trout in Upper Klamath and Agency lakes. This pattern sets the standard for imitating damsel nymphs, which are so important to the stillwater angler during early to mid-summer. Our local lakes in Central Oregon, including Crane Prairie, East Lake, Hosmer and others have excellent damsel hatches. So, at this time of year, I often reach for Denny's Stillwater Nymph in my fly box.

The Damsel hatch occurs mid-day in later June and is characterized by a very splashy rise forms as trout take damselfs swimming just below the surface film. Damselfs look to find sticks, tules, anchor ropes, or any other object that enables them to crawl out of the water to hatch. They often swim just below the surface for some distance looking for these items latch onto. It is during this surface swimming action that the damself is the most vulnerable to trout. The damself nymph coloration matches the color of the environment that these insects live, and ranges from tan to a deep olive. When fishing this pattern, strip the fly in in short, slow strokes, with long pauses in between. And hold on!

I recently got Denny's Signature fly rod built by Snowbee. This rod is a 9-foot, 6 weight that possesses a strong butt section to throw larger lake patterns and to help punch casts through the wind, but a softer tip section to handle those soft takes in lakes. It casts like a dream. I took it to Crane Prairie last week for an inaugural trip. And it seemed only natural to tie on one of Denny's Stillwater Nymph patterns to go with the new rod. We had a great damsel hatch that day and damsel nymphs were climbing up the anchor rope and hatching by the dozens. There were big swirls as trout hungrily feasted on the emerging damsel nymphs. On one of my first casts, a nice 20-inch rainbow took the stillwater nymph pattern and put the rod to the test. It passed with flying colors with this nice fish to net!



A nice 20-inch Rainbow and Denny Rickards Signature Rod.

Give Denny's Stillwater Nymph pattern a try during damsel hatches on a favorite local lake. It is an easy pattern to master at the vice. And check out Denny's new Signature rod from Snowbee; a perfect tool for stillwater anglers.

Denny's Stillwater Nymph Materials List:

Hook: Firehole 718, Size 14

Thread: Ultra 140 Denier, Brown/Olive

Weight: 4-6 wraps .015 Lead Wire

Tail/Wing Case: Dark Olive Marabou
Rib: Medium Copper Wire
Body: Bruiser Blend Jr. Olive Brown

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/L809ESshNdA>

Experiment with this pattern during the Damsel Hatch. If you have questions or would like additional information about the Denny's Stillwater Nymph 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.