

Modified Raccoon Fly Pattern

Sunriver Angler's Fly Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer



I often run into situations out fishing where I need to solve what fly pattern the fish are taking. Such was the case a couple years ago on Crane Prairie. There was a nice Black and Silver midge hatch occurring and trout were taking flies right in the surface film. But none of my usual patterns were proving to do the trick. When I got home that afternoon, I turned to Phil Rowley's "*Fly Patterns for Stillwaters*". I rely on this book often for suggestions on tackling fly pattern conundrums. As many of you know, Mr. Rowley is a stillwater expert. In the section on Chironomids, I spied a pattern called the Raccoon, and that looked like it might offer a solution to what I was seeing on the water. So, I tied up a few and gave them a try later that week. Bingo, they worked!

Fast forward to last summer, I was fishing out in Eastern Oregon at Grindstone Lakes and ran into a very similar hatch situation. There were several very large rainbows feeding in shallow water. As I took in the scene, I noticed a Chironomid right next to my float tube struggling to emerge from its shuck. It had a telltale black body and silver rib, just like those I saw on Crane Prairie a couple years prior. I quickly reached for my midge fly box and tied on my version of the Raccoon. On my first cast I was tied onto a feisty 22 inch rainbow that jumped several times and gave me quite a tussle. After releasing this fish, I gave a silent thank you directed to Phil Rowley for sharing his knowledge and wisdom in his books.

This version of the Raccoon differs slightly from the version in Phil Rowley's book. I used foam for the shellback instead of elk hair. This makes the fly a bit more durable. I also folded the foam over the ostrich gills, whereas the original tied the gills behind the fold. And, lastly, I elected to use a thread body ribbed with silver wire, instead of a

dubbed black body. Give this fly a try during Chironomid time next spring. I think you'll like it.

Modified Raccoon Fly Pattern Materials List:

Hook: Tiemco 5212, Size 12-18

Thread: Ultra 140 Denier, Black

Trailing Shuck: Teal Barred Flank Feather

Gills: Ostrich Dyed White

Abdomen: Black Thread

Rib: Ultra Wire, Size Small Silver

Shell Back: 2 mm Foam, Tan

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/Kc1QLOQCcQo> Experiment with this pattern on our local lakes. If you have questions or would like additional information about the Modified Raccoon 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.