

Trimmer Line Skater

by Bob Percy

Recipe

Hook : Daiichi #1710, size 6

Thread : Orange, 6/0

Extension: .080" trimmer line

Body: Superfine dubbing,
October caddis orange

Hackle: Grizzly dyed brown

Rib: Gold wire, small

Wing: Elk hair



This fly is presented more as a demonstration of a tying technique for a skating fly rather than a specific pattern. Hence for the purposes here I call it the Trimmer Line Skater. I learned about this technique from Dustin Kovacvich the head guide and proprietor of the Nicholas Dean Lodge in British Columbia. Unfortunately a big storm caused water conditions to be too high for successfully skating up a steelhead so the flies I tied languished in a box. A few years later I was in Labrador fishing for Brook Trout. We had scrambled over big rocks and downed trees to reach a pool named the Foam Pool. At the recommendation of the guide I first tried a Bomber, a classic skating pattern, but met with only limited success. I then decided to try a Trimmer Line Skater. The results were spectacular. For many casts 2 or 3 Brookies from 12 to 18 inches slashed at the fly, often missing but plenty of times hooking up. Skating flies are designed to be dragged across the surface to create a wake but unfortunately it is fairly easy to pull them under.

The Trimmer Line Skater avoids this problem by tying the elk hair wing on an extension in front of the eye rather than on the hook shank behind the eye. This causes the front of the fly to tilt upward minimizing the chances that it will be dragged under. The extension is a piece of "weed whacker" (trimmer) line lashed to the hook shank. By varying the size and colors, several different bugs of importance in our area can be simulated. These include the Motorboat Caddis on Georgetown Lake, October Caddis and of course Steelhead on the Salmon river.

