

Fly of the Month

By Dennis Westover

The Quigley Cripple

(Mirabeau body version)



Recipe

Hook: TMC 100 sizes 10 – 18

Thread: UTC Ultra 70 denier (black) or Roman Moser Power Silk (dark gray)

Tail: Insect brown Zelon – $\frac{3}{4}$ shank length (tail is optional)

Rib: Fine gold wire

Body: Three or four individual long strands of olive or dark brown Mirabeau tied in, twisted together and wound forward on the hook shank.

Thorax: Tan (olive body) or pale olive caddis dubbing (brown body).

Wing: Elk hair tied in facing forward over the hook eye.

Hackle: Three turns of grizzly hackle.

This month's pattern is a fly originally designed by Bob Quigley, a highly regarded fly designer and guide from the Fall River area of Northern California. Although Bob's pattern was originally intended for spring creek trout I have found it effective on freestone rivers, lakes, steelhead drifts (larger sizes) and in the salt for sea run cutthroat. Fish of all species seem to love it and because of that it has been one of my favorite patterns for more than twenty years. I know that many of our Club members are familiar with this pattern and fish it regularly but I'm not sure that many are aware of the mirabeau body version. I prefer this version to a dubbed body because the mirabeau moves in the water and traps air bubbles in its fibers, more closely imitating the actual crippled insect. Bottom line – it catches fish!!! I tie the Quig with brown, olive and purple Mirabeau bodies to imitate most of the seasonal hatches on the Bitterroot and other Montana rivers. Tie up a few (size 14 is a good all-purpose size) and try them next spring. You won't be disappointed....

The photos below illustrate the technique I use to tie the Mirabeau body. Tie in the Zelon tail (optional) and fine gold wire, Strip six to eight LONG Mirabeau fibers from the side of a premium mirabeau feather and tie them in by the tips.

Attach your hackle pliers to the ends of the mirabeau and twist them clockwise tightly forming a dubbing noodle.



Wrap the dubbing noodle forward on the hook shank to about the $\frac{3}{4}$ position on the hook shank and tie off. Counter wrap the wire.



Stack a clump of elk hair (a bit less than the thickness of a pencil for a size 12) and tie it in facing towards the eye of the hook. I prefer elk hair with thicker fibers that carry that thickness all the way to the tips. Avoid thin fibers with long, skinny tips.



Once the elk is secured trim the butts as shown. Select a grizzly hackle (either neck or saddle is fine) and wrap three turns at the tie in point then bring the hackle forward in front of the wing and tie off. Form a head and whip finish. I like to put a drop of head cement where the hackle is wrapped around the elk as insurance against sharp-toothed trout.

The Ouigley is designed to float hook point down and wing up so apply floatant to ONLY the hackle and wing, allowing the mirabeau body to sink.