



## Tying Quill Winged and Flank Feather Winged Wet Flies

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### Objectives

Participating young people and adults will:

1. Practice applying dubbed fur and floss bodies
2. Practice applying quill, flank feather and married quill wings
3. Practice applying bearded and wound hackles
4. Practice following fly patterns effectively
5. Develop a sense of wet fly proportion
6. Have fun while learning.

### Youth Development Objectives

Participating young people will:

1. Enhance ability to interpret and follow instructions
2. Enhance hand-eye coordination and tying skill
3. Enhance self confidence and self image
4. Enhance communication skills
5. Enhance evaluation skills and plan for improvement

### Roles for Teen and Junior Leaders

1. Demonstrate tying procedures as needed
2. Assist participants as needed
3. Evaluate flies and suggest ways to improve
4. Encourage young people as they learn tying skills.

### Potential Parental Involvement:

1. See "Roles for Teen and Junior Leaders" above.
2. Arrange for or provide teaching location
3. Arrange for or provide tying materials/equipment
4. Arrange for or provide transportation
5. Arrange for or provide refreshments.

**Best Time:** Any time of year - early lesson

**Best Location:** Well lighted, comfortable area

**Time Required:** 60 to 90 minutes

### Equipment/Materials

tying vise  
 hackle pliers  
 bobbin  
 bobbin threader  
 dubbing needle  
 black 6/0 tying thread  
 head cement  
 #8,10,or 12 wet fly hooks  
 soft hackles (dun, ginger, brown, scarlet, white and black )  
 mole or muskrat dubbing  
 hare's mask  
 black dubbing  
 floss (scarlet, yellow)  
 fine black chenille  
 duck wing quills (natural, scarlet, white)  
 peacock herl  
 black ostrich herl  
 wood duck (or dyed mallard) flank  
 mallard flank  
 golden pheasant tippet  
 fine, flat gold tinsel

### Safety Considerations

No special considerations

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## 6. Discuss personal experience in fishing or tying.

## References

See references in introduction

### Evaluation Suggestions

1. Observe communication and other interactions among participants
2. Critique flies and observe later improvement
3. Observe body language of participants
4. Observe growth in confidence with experience

### Lesson Outline

#### Presentation

#### Application

- I. Traditional wet fly patterns
  - A. Typical pattern components
    1. Tail
      - a. Hackle fibers
      - b. Flank feather slips
      - c. Duck or goose quill slips
      - d. Partridge or grouse
    2. Body
      - a. Parts
        - 1) Tip
        - 2) Butt
        - 3) Body
        - 4) Thorax
      - b. Materials
        - 1) Dubbing
        - 2) Wool
        - 3) Chenille
        - 4) Floss
        - 5) Herl
        - 6) Tinsel
      3. Rib
        - a. Ribbing tinsel
        - b. Tag
      4. Wings
        - a. Flank feather
        - b. Quill strips
        - c. Hackle points
        - d. Hair
      5. Hackle
        - a. Materials
          - 1) Hen or soft cock
          - 2) Partridge, grouse or woodcock
          - 3) Waterfowl flank
        - b. Types
          - 1) Wound
          - 2) Bearded
          - 3) Hackle feather sections
    - II. Hendrickson wet fly
      - A. Pattern
        1. Hook: wet fly #10-14
        2. Tail: dark blue dun hackle fibers

Using one or more large wet flies or a large poster of a generic wet fly, **POINT OUT** the parts of the fly as they are discussed. Have the materials that might be used available and let the participants observe them as they are covered in the lesson.

**LAY OUT** the materials for this pattern and **DEMONSTRATE** each piece as the pattern is outlined.

3. Body: mole or muskrat fur dubbing
  4. Hackle: soft dark dun
  5. Wing: wood duck flank
  6. Head: cork amber or orange thread
- B. Tying procedure
1. Secure appropriate hook in vise
  2. Attach thread to shank near bend
  3. Attach tail with several turns of thread
    - a. Pluck a few hackle fibers
    - b. Even ends with natural tips to rear
    - c. Leave tail about shank length
  4. Apply dubbing body
    - a. Pluck some fur from skin
    - b. Remove guard hairs
    - c. Touch fur to thread and spin forming a yarn
    - d. Wind tapered body to shoulder
  5. Attach hackle at throat
    - a. Select hackle for fiber length
    - b. Attach hackle to hook
      - 1) Bearded hackle approach
        - a) Strip a clump of hackle fibers
        - b) Hold fibers in place
        - c) Bind hackle in at throat
      - 2) Hackle section technique
        - a) Select and prepare hackle
        - b) Snip section from feather
        - c) Bind in feather base
        - d) Pull hackle fibers under thread
      - 3) Wound hackle technique
        - a) Prepare a hackle feather
        - b) Wind 1-2 turns around shank
        - c) Pull hackles back and down
        - d) Bind in place with thread
  6. Apply wood duck flank wing
    - a. Strip feather section from quill
    - b. Bunch fibers and bind in place
      - 1) Small, sparse bunch best
      - 2) Wing length slightly beyond tail
      - 3) Hold tightly and bind tightly at shoulder
      - 4) Trim base of wing on a taper
  7. Wind tapered head and whip finish
  8. Apply head cement

**DEMONSTRATE** the tying procedure as it is explained to the participants. Once the fly is completed, leave it in the vise as a model for comparison.

**DEMONSTRATE** both the technique of securing the hackle fiber tail and its length for good proportion.

**DEMONSTRATE** one or more dubbing techniques.

**EMPHASIZE** spinning a thin fur yarn on the tying thread.

**EMPHASIZE** the use of soft hackle to maximize action in the water and keeping the hackle sparse to suggest aquatic insects better. **NOTE** that each of the methods outlined will be used in flies during this session.

**DEMONSTRATE** application of a flank feather wing.  
**EMPHASIZE** the fact that sparse ties tend to be better fish catchers than more bulky ties (except for anglers).

**DEMONSTRATE** trimming the base of the wing at an angle to prepare a base for a well-proportioned head.

### III. Professor

#### A. Pattern

1. Hook - wet fly sized to use
2. Thread - black 6/0
3. Tail - scarlet duck or goose quill
4. Rib - gold tinsel
5. Body - yellow floss
6. Hackle - sparse, dark ginger
7. Wing - mallard flank

**LAY OUT** and illustrate each of the required materials for tying the Professor.

#### B. Tying procedure

1. Select and secure wet fly hook in vise **DEMONSTRATE** each step in the tying process on a fly as the

2. Attach tying thread near bend in hook
3. Bind in tail - thin strip of scarlet quill
  - a. Cut a thin strip from the feather
  - b. Position the tail - natural tips to rear
  - c. Bind tail in place
4. Secure ribbing tinsel near tail
5. Carry thread to the shoulder
6. Secure and wind on tapered body
7. Bind off body at throat
8. Apply and secure ribbing
9. Attach and apply dark ginger hackle
10. Pull hackle back and down and secure
11. Attach a mallard flank wing
  - a. Pluck section of well-barred flank feather
  - b. Even ends if necessary
  - c. Hold in place and bind down
  - d. Trim butts of wing materials
12. Wind head and finish

participants look on. Make sure that everyone can see the entire process well.

**USE** techniques previously outlined to tie the pattern, leaving the finished fly as a model for the participants.

**EMPHASIZE** the use of an angled cut on the wing butts to prepare a sound base for forming a head.

#### IV. Lead-winged Coachman

##### A. Pattern

1. Hook - wet fly sized to use
2. Thread - black 6/0
3. Body - peacock herl
4. Hackle - sparse, brown
5. Wing - mallard wing quill slips

**LAY OUT** the materials required to tie the lead-winged coachman wet fly and point out each one as its use in the pattern is outlined.

##### B. Tying procedure

1. Secure hook in vise and attach thread near bend
2. Bind in 3-5 peacock herls
3. Wind herl to shoulder and tie down
  - a. Wind one at a time OR
  - b. Form a herl rope around thread
4. Attach and wind on coachman brown hackle
  - a. Soft hackle preferred
  - b. Keep it sparse - 1 or 2 turns
  - c. Smooth back and down and secure
5. Prepare wing materials
  - a. Use matching right and left feathers
  - b. Select matching slips from lower half of feathers
  - c. Secure wings together
    - 1) Outside together upper tips down
      - a) Easier tie
      - b) More slender appearance
      - c) Brighter appearance
    - 2) Inside edges together upper tips up
      - a) Tent-like wing
      - b) Durable wing
      - c) Duller, darker appearance
6. Secure wings in place
7. Trim butts of wings and wind head

**DEMONSTRATE** both methods of tying in multiple strands of peacock herl - individual and rope - and discuss the pros and cons of the two methods.

**DEMONSTRATE** the techniques used and the parts of the feather that work best for wet fly wings. **NOTE** the necessity to match the strips and the differences in the wing appearance that come from matching inside and outside feather sides.

8. Whip finish and apply cement

V. Royal Coachman

A. Pattern

1. Hook - wet fly sized to use
2. Thread - black 6/0
3. Tail - golden pheasant tippet
4. Body - peacock herl, scarlet floss, peacock herl in equal thirds
5. Hackle - coachman brown, soft and sparse
6. Wing - white duck quill slips

B. Tying procedure

1. Attach thread near bend of hook
2. Bind in golden pheasant tippet tail
3. Bind in peacock herl at base of tail
4. Wind rear third of body with herl and tie off
5. Bind in and wind scarlet floss at center of body
6. Bind in and wind peacock herl on front third of body
7. Apply one or two turns of coachman brown hackle
  - a. Soft and sparse
  - b. Pulled back and down and secured
8. Match white duck quill strip wings
9. Apply wings and finish fly

**LAY OUT** and **IDENTIFY** the materials needed to tie the royal coachman wet fly.

**DIFFERENTIATE** between golden pheasant tippet and golden pheasant crest if necessary.

**DEMONSTRATE** the tying procedure as each step is explained, leaving the fly in the vise as a reference pattern for the tiers.

VI. Black Gnat

A. Pattern

1. Hook - wet fly sized to use
2. Thread - black 6/0
3. Body - fine black chenille or dubbing
4. Hackle - black, soft and sparse
5. Wing - mallard quill slips

B. Tying procedure

1. Attach thread near bend of hook
2. Attach section of black chenille
3. Carry thread forward to shoulder
4. Wind chenille body and bind down at shoulder
5. Apply one or two turns of hackle
6. Arrange hackles as desired
  - a. Pull back and down slightly
  - b. Bind in place
7. Apply mallard quill wings
8. Trim wing butts, wind head and finish

**LAY OUT** and **EXPLAIN** the materials needed for tying the black gnat.

**TIE** a demonstration fly and leave it in the vise as a reference pattern for the tiers. If possible **SHOW** the pattern tied with both chenille and fur bodies.

VII. Gold-ribbed hare's ear

A. Pattern

1. Hook - wet fly sized to use
2. Thread - black 6/0
3. Tail
  - a. Brown hackle fibers
  - b. Rabbit guard hair

**LAY OUT** and **EXPLAIN** the materials needed to complete the gold-ribbed hare's ear.

4. Rib - flat gold tinsel
5. Body - hare's mask dubbing
6. Hackle - fur/guard hairs picked
7. Wing - mallard quill slips

B. Tying procedure

1. Attach thread near bend
2. Attach tail materials
3. Bind in flat gold tinsel rib
4. Prepare hare's mask dubbing
  - a. Mix of fur and guard hairs
  - b. Modestly heavy and coarse
5. Apply dubbing body to shoulder
6. Apply ribbing to shoulder
7. Apply mallard quill wings
8. Trim wing butts, wind head and finish
9. Pick out dubbing
  - a. Dubbing needle or brush
  - b. Rough appearance throughout
  - c. Hackle-like at throat

**DEMONSTRATE** with a single fly and leave it in the vise as a demonstration fly for the tiers.

**NOTE** that a small, thin brush or a dubbing needle can be used to pick out the dubbing material producing a roughened appearance, and that the more the fly is used, the better it usually becomes.

VIII. Parmachene Belle

A. Pattern

1. Hook - wet fly sized to use
2. Thread - black 6/0
3. Tail - married red over white duck quill
4. Rib - flat gold tinsel
5. Body - yellow floss or wool
6. Hackle - sparse, mixed red and white
7. Wing - married white over red over white duck quill
8. Older ties include black ostrich butt

**LAY OUT** the materials needed to complete the Parmachene Belle wet fly.

B. Tying procedures

1. Attach thread near bend of hook
2. Select matched scarlet and white quill slips for tail
3. Marry (smooth together) tail materials
4. Bind tail in place and trim end
5. Tie in and apply butt if desired
6. Tie in ribbing tinsel
7. Tie in body material at shoulder
8. Wind a double wound body and tie off
9. Apply and bind down ribbing
10. Apply red and white hackles, mixed
11. Pull back slightly and bind down
12. Marry matched scarlet and white quill slips
13. Apply wings tent style
14. Trim butts, wind head and finish

**DEMONSTRATE** the tying procedure for this pattern on one fly, leaving it in the vise as a model for the tiers to use for comparison as they tie their versions.

**DEMONSTRATE** the process of marrying fibers to form a red and white tail.

**EMPHASIZE** mixing the two colors of hackle thoroughly.

IX. Fishing them

**REFER** to hackle wet flies lesson for fishing tactics.

## **Summary Activity**

Have participants critique their own flies and discuss ways they could improve their technique on the patterns they have just tied, or discuss the origins and uses of the patterns for fish in your area.

## **Lesson Narrative**

Traditional wet fly patterns include a tail, body, hackle and wings. They may be imitative, suggestive or attractor patterns; but they are designed to be fished below the surface. Tail materials commonly included bits of wool or acrylic body material, hackle fibers, slips of flank feathers or waterfowl wing quills, or partridge, grouse or other body feathers. The body may include a tag, tip, butt or thorax. The body and thorax are commonly made of dubbed fur, with or without guard hairs, wool, acrylic yarn, chenille, floss, or peacock herl as well as flat, embossed or oval tinsel or wire. On some patterns copper, brass or lead wire may be used as an underbody. Bodies are frequently ribbed with tinsel or mylar to add flash and attraction to the flies. Other ribbing material might include hackle quills, plastic, flashabou or similar materials designed to provide some desired effect. Wings may be lacking in some patterns (like those tied last session) or made of flank feathers, wing quill strips, hackle points, hair or synthetic materials. Hackles most commonly are hen or soft cock hackles, but some patterns use body feathers from game birds, waterfowl flank feathers or similar feathers that provide the desired effect. It may be applied as a beard (a wing-like application under the throat and along the lower sides of the throat area), wound on and swept down and back, or applied as segments of hackle pulled under thread wraps at the throat of the fly. In wet flies, it is usually best to keep the hackle sparse - one or two turns for maximum action in the water.

## **Tying the Hendrickson Wet Fly**

The Hendrickson wet fly is an imitative pattern for a common mayfly. It emerges from the nymphal skin under the water and swims toward the surface with partially unfurled wings. Several species can be suggested with this pattern, ranging in size from about a size 14 to about a size 10. The pattern is as follows:

- Hook: 10 -14 wet fly (e.g. Mustad 3906 or 7957B)
- Tail: dark blue dun hackle fibers
- Body: mole or muskrat fur dubbing
- Hackle: soft dark dun
- Wing: wood duck flank
- Head: dark amber or orange tying thread

Start to tie the Hendrickson wet fly by securing an appropriate hook in the vise with the shank parallel to the tying surface. Using the crossover technique, attach the thread to the shank near the bend of the hook. Pluck a few hackle fibers from a dark dun hackle feather, and attach the tail leaving about a shank-length of material beyond the tie down area. Next apply a dubbed fur body using mole, muskrat or tannish gray red fox fur with the guard hairs removed to form a thin, tightly wound dubbing material. Wind a slightly tapered body to the shoulder area and tie off the dubbing material with several turns of tying thread. Select a soft dun hackle with fibers about one and one-half times the gap length and attach it at the shoulder with several turns of thread. Trim the butt of the hackle away and wrap one or two turns around the shank. Bind the tip of the hackle down and trim the excess away. Pull the hackles back slightly and bind them in place with a couple turns of thread. Pluck a bunch of fibers from a wood duck flank feather. Even the tips slightly and bunch them together to form a common wing. Hold the wing in place firmly and bind it down with several turns of thread. Trim the butts of the wing fibers at an angle to make it easier to tie a nicely tapered head. Wind a good head, whip finish and trim the thread. Apply several drops of head cement to complete the fly.

## **Tying the Professor**

The Professor is an attractor pattern that is tied for a wide variety of fishes, although it was developed as a brook trout pattern. It can be useful for a wide variety of species from trout and salmon to panfish and bass, tied in a variety of sizes. The pattern is as follows:

- Hook: wet fly sized to use
- Thread: black 6/0
- Tail: scarlet duck or goose quill

Rib: gold tinsel  
Body: yellow floss  
Hackle: sparse, dark ginger  
Wing: mallard flank

Start dressing the Professor by attaching the thread near the bend of the hook. Cut and bind in a narrow strip of scarlet duck quill as a tail. Trim the excess material from the base and tie in a strip of narrow gold tinsel for ribbing material. Let the tinsel hang and carry the thread forward to the shoulder area to tie in the body material. Wind a double wound tapered body and bind the body material down at the shoulder. Apply several turns of gold tinsel in open spirals over the body. Tie off the ribbing and trim the end cleanly. Attach a fairly long, soft, dark ginger (pale amber-brown) hackle and wind one or two turns at the shoulder. Bind it down and trim away the excess hackle. Pull the hackle back slightly and secure it in place with a couple turns of tying thread. Apply a fairly sparse mallard flank wing and trim the butts of the fibers at an angle. Wrap a nicely proportioned head, whip finish and apply head cement to finish the fly.

### **Tying the Lead-winged Coachman**

The lead-winged coachman is an excellent and widely useful wet fly. In addition to being a useful searching or attractor pattern it is a fair imitation of several caddis fly species. It is a fairly simple tie, consisting of a body, hackle and wings (some add a flat gold tinsel tag). The pattern is as follows:

Hook: wet fly sized to use  
Thread: black 6/0  
Body: peacock herl  
Hackle: sparse, brown  
Wing: mallard wing quill slips

Start tying the lead-winged coachman by securing the thread near the bend of the hook. If a tag is desired, attach a strip of flat gold tinsel and wind about two turns behind the thread and back forward to the tie down area. Bind it down with several turns of thread and trim the excess material away. If not, simply tie in one to five strands of peacock herl (depending upon hook size and the desired body thickness). Smaller flies can be tied with a single strand, but larger ones may require several. To build a more durable fly (although many believe a less good-looking one), wind the herl around the tying thread; then wind both the herl and thread around the shank together. Even if a fish's teeth cut the herl, the thread tends to hold the body together. Wind the herl to the shoulder area and tie it off, trimming the butt ends. Select a soft, coachman brown hackle of appropriate size, strip the lower fibers away and bind the hackle in place. Wind one or two turns of hackle around the hook and tie off the hackle with several turns of thread. Trim the tip of the hackle away. Press the hackles back slightly and bind them in place with a few turns of tying thread. Select a matched set of wing quill slips from the lower part of two matched mallard quills. Hold the upper, inner faces of the slips together, hold them firmly in place over the shoulder area, and bind them down with several turns of tying thread. Trim the butts of the wings at an angle and wind a well-formed head, finishing with a whip finish and head cement.

Note: Some tiers prefer to match the outer sides of the wing quill slips, producing a narrower, slimmer wing that is more compact than the tented style outlined above. Both styles are acceptable, and a tier should attempt both of them to become familiar with the two techniques. The tented style places the longest tip of the wing at the highest point on the wing. The longest tip of the wing is located on the lower edge of the wing in the thinner tying style.

### **Tying a Royal Coachman Wet**

The Royal Coachman wet fly is an old pattern that remains useful today. While some contend that the pattern imitates one species of fish food or another, most would content that it is an excellent attractor with wide utility as a searching pattern and lots of strike inducing character. The standard pattern is as follows:

Hook: wet fly sized to use  
Thread: black 6/0  
Tail: golden pheasant tippet  
Body: peacock herl, scarlet floss, peacock herl in equal thirds  
Hackle: coachman brown, soft and sparse

Wing: white duck quill slips

Tying procedure for the Royal Coachman wet fly starts with the thread attached near the bend on the hook. Snip or pluck a few fibers from a golden pheasant tippet, and bind them in at the end of the shank. Trim away the butt ends of the tail fibers, and attach a broad peacock herl at the butt of the tail. Carry the thread forward slightly to allow room for the peacock herl butt. Wind several turns of peacock herl and bind it down before trimming the excess. Carry the thread forward to the shoulder area and bind in a strip of scarlet floss. Wind the floss smoothly back to the herl butt and back forward to the shoulder, binding it down and trimming the excess. Bind in another piece of herl and carry the thread forward. Wind a herl band about the same size as the butt at the shoulder, and bind the herl in place. Trim the excess away. The finished body should be symmetrical, with modest butt and shoulder sections of herl and a central band of scarlet. Select a soft, coachman brown hackle of appropriate length, strip away the lower fibers and bind it in at the shoulder. Wind one or two turns of hackle, secure the tip and trim away the excess. If desired, sweep the hackles back and down, binding them in place with a few turns of thread. Cut a matched set of wing quill slips from the lower section of matched white duck wing feathers. Hold them firmly over the shoulder area while binding them in place with several turns of thread. Trim the butt ends of the quill slips at an angle, wind a nicely formed head, whip finish, and finish the fly with head cement.

### **Tying a Black Gnat**

The black gnat is a relatively old pattern that is effective in many situations where a dark fly is required. It is an effective northern trout pattern, particularly in areas where black flies are a significant part of their diet. The contrast between the dark body and the lighter wings also makes the gnat an excellent searching pattern for many species. The pattern is as follows:

Hook: wet fly sized to use  
Thread: black 6/0  
Tail: (optional) black hackle fibers  
Body: fine black chenille (or black dubbing)  
Hackle: black, soft and sparse  
Wing: mallard quill slips

Begin tying the fly by attaching the thread near the end of the shank and tying in a piece of black chenille of the appropriate diameter for the size fly being tied. Carry the thread forward to the shoulder area and let the bobbin hang. Wind the chenille forward to the shoulder area in tight wraps. (Some tiers like to substitute a black fur, like black bear under fur, for the black chenille, but chenille is much easier to handle and makes a blacker body.) Select and prepare a soft black hackle feather, and tie it in at the shoulder. Wind one or two turns of hackle of hackle, tie the tip down, and trim the excess away. Using either of the techniques learned earlier, prepare and attach a pair of mallard wing quill wings (remember to take them from the lower portion of matched feathers). Trim the butt ends of the wings at a taper and wind a smooth, well-proportioned head before whip finishing and applying head cement to the finished fly. [Note: Variations on this pattern make excellent panfish and bass flies.]

### **Tying the Gold-ribbed Hare's Ear**

The gold-ribbed hare's ear is one of the patterns most fly fishermen would choose to include in a small selection of patterns if they were forced to do so. It is very "buggy" and imitates or suggests a wide variety of insect foods used by fishes. It gets better as the body is plucked out to a ragged appearance by the teeth of fish. The classic pattern follows:

Hook: wet fly sized to use  
Thread: black 60  
Tail: brown hackle fibers or rabbit guard hair  
Rib: flat gold tinsel  
Body: hare's mask dubbing (leave guard hairs in)  
Hackle: pick out fur at front of fly  
Wing: mallard quill slips

The gold-ribbed hare's ear is a relatively simple tie. Begin by attaching the thread at the rear of the shank in preparation for attaching the tail. Attach a tail of brown hackle fibers or rabbit guard hairs. Trim the

excess tail material and tie in a strip of gold tinsel for ribbing. Pluck a bit of fur with the guard hairs intact from a hare's mask and spin it on the thread to form a rough strand of dubbing. Wind the dubbing to the shoulder and bind it down. Apply the gold tinsel rib, tying it down at the shoulder. Prepare a pair of matched wings from the lower section of matched mallard (or other gray duck wing) feathers, and secure them in place with several wraps of thread. Trim the butts of the wings and form a tapered head. Once the fly has been whip finished and had head cement applied to the head, use a dubbing needle or a small, stiff brush to pick out the fur to form a shaggy body, particularly at the throat to simulate hackle. The roughened body has a translucent, buggy appearance that seems to be extremely attractive to fish.

### **Tying the Parmachene Belle**

The Parmachene Belle originated as a brook trout pattern. It is included here both as a bright searching pattern and as an example of a pattern using married wings. The technique of marrying wings is used in many traditional salmon flies and a few traditional trout and bass flies. The barbules of like-shaped feathers are smoothed together, interlocking to form a unified whole from the parts. This pattern marries two strips in the tail and three in the wing, but it teaches the technique nicely. The pattern follows:

Hook: wet fly sized to use

Thread: black 6/0

Tail: married red over white duck quill

Rib: flat gold tinsel

Body: yellow floss or wool

Hackle: sparse, mixed red and white

Wing: married white over red over white duck quill

Note: Older ties include a butt of black ostrich herl

The dressing process for this pattern begins with the tail being constructed and attached. Quill slips to be married work best if they are taken from approximately the same location on similar sized feathers. The leading edges of feathers are somewhat more difficult to marry, but they will work for tailing. Clip a slip of scarlet wing quill a few fibers wide and a similar section of white wing quill. Place the scarlet slip atop the white one and stroke them from base to tip between the fingers. This should be adequate to interlock their barbules. Place the married tail in position, and tie it down with several turns of thread. Trim the excess at the butt of the tail and tie in a strip of flat gold tinsel for ribbing material. (If an ostrich butt is to be used, tie it in before attaching the ribbing material.) Carry the thread forward to the shoulder and tie in the body materials. Wrap the yellow floss or wool rearward and back to the shoulder, making a slightly tapered body. Apply several turns of tinsel as a rib. [Traditionalists would insist on 2 1/2 turns, but suit yourself on the amount.] Tie in one scarlet and one white hackle feather at the shoulder (approximately one to one and one-half turns of each feather). Construct a pair of wings by marrying strips of white, scarlet and white quill fibers. Hold them together and bind them in place at the shoulder. Trim the butts of the wings at an angle, finish the head and apply head cement.

### **Fishing Them**

Wet fly tactics are discussed in the lesson on tying hackle wets. Those tactics do not differ significantly for the classic types of wet flies. Literally thousands of patterns are available and potentially useful to the angler.

### **Exhibit or Sharing Suggestions**

1. Prepare a poster, models or photographs to show the steps in tying any of the patterns included in this lesson or a wet fly of your own choosing.
2. Study fly fishing books or magazines to see what other types of standard wet flies that might be useful in your area. Test the patterns and share the results with your group or other interested persons.
3. Prepare a method demonstration on tying one of these wet flies or a similar type of pattern and present that demonstration in an appropriate setting.
4. Prepare a photographic story of tying a wet fly of your choosing from the beginning of the tying process to using the fly in fishing.

5. Record your experiences with tying and using flies in a tying and fishing journal. Share that journal with others in an appropriate setting.
6. Make a series of flies and fly pattern cards that can be exhibited at a fair or similar gathering.
7. Try variations of wet flies to see if you can develop something that works more effectively for the fish in your area. Record your experiments and experimental patterns in a journal and share your findings with others in your group.

### **Community Service and "Giving Back" Activities**

1. Consider ways of helping other young people learn how to tie flies, setting up tying clinics or instructional programs for interested people.
2. Tie a set of flies that can be used as auction items or door prizes in community events or fund raisers.
3. Donate flies to a local fishing program.

### **Extensions or Ways of Learning More**

1. Observe fish and the foods that they eat on your local waters. Using what you know about tying flies, try to develop a pattern that imitates or suggests a food the fish seem to prefer. Research existing fly patterns to see if someone has developed a fly that does what you want. Modify existing patterns or create your own pattern in an attempt to catch the fish you are seeking.
2. Collect stomach contents from fish you like to catch. Observe the contents of those stomachs and record what you find in a notebook. Determine if their food habits are the same all the time or if they change with the time of day and season. Use references to entomology or other fields to assist in identifying what the fish are eating and attempt to create a seasonal reference to their favorite foods.
3. Observe fish actively feeding on a local stream, pond or lake. By careful study, see what they are eating and how they feed. Do they take everything that is a potential food item, or are they selecting something from a set of food choices? What characteristics seem to determine which food items are taken and which ones are rejected? How can that apply to your fly tying efforts?

### **Links to Other Programs**

The link to the rest of the sportfishing program is obvious. Fly tying is a natural link to fly fishing as well as to crafting other types of tackle. Rod building can be a means of having an excellent fly rod at a lower cost. The feathers, furs and other materials needed by a fly tier can lead to interests in hunting, trapping, waterfowl, poultry science or other seemingly unrelated fields. Understanding aquatic ecology as well as keen observation skills are important to success in both tying and fishing flies. This can provide entry into the sciences, either as a future vocation or as an avocational activity. Fishing flies can lead to an interest in several fields of engineering. Tying flies can be a great introduction to economics and marketing for young entrepreneurs. Finally, the hobby of tying flies is both craft and art. It can lead into many other areas of activity from writing and photography to science.