

Parachute Hopper... Tom Regina

Grasshoppers become lively and fly around fields and meadows on warm summer and early fall days. Populations of adult, winged hoppers peak in August and September and become especially active on days with a warm dry wind.

Grasshoppers are poor fliers and windy conditions can blow them onto the water where they become a big meal for trout. The wind will also blow them from streamside vegetation onto the water. Most hoppers that end up on the water will land along and close to the stream edge and tumble along in the water close to the shore. Cutbanks and overhanging stream vegetation provide trout with shade from the sun and protection from overhead predators. Add the element of food and cutbanks and overhanging vegetation areas become prime feeding lays and ambush points for trout seeking a big meal of hoppers.

To fish a hopper along and close to a stream bank cast the hopper imitation close to the bank and "splat" it down softly. Or cast onto the bank then pull the fly onto the water with a natural soft splat. In either case dead drift the fly along with the current while imparting some "kicking and swimming" action to the fly to mimic the action of a real hopper and to attract the trout. Hoppers that get blown onto the water farther from shore will usually kick toward shore. On small streams hoppers will be blown onto the middle of the stream with some regularity. Cast to mid stream and retrieve the fly with a series of two or three very short, one or two inch, jerky strips. Rest the fly for a few seconds and repeat the jerk strip. Keep in mind however, the vast majority of hoppers on the water will be close to shore and this is where trout will be holding for them.

Tying Materials

Hook	Mustad R52S, dry fly, 2XL
Thread	6/0 tan
Wing Post	Gray Polypropylene Yarn
Body	Burnt orange Antron Yarn
Wing	Mottled turkey feather section sprayed with Krylon
Workable	Fixatif (can be purchased from art supply stores).
Legs	Rainy's Knotted Hopper Legs
Hackle	Grizzly rooster saddle feather



Tying Instructions



1. Debarb the hook and fix it in the vise. In neat touching turns wrap a thread base over the hook shank from the hook eye to a point directly over the hook barb. In a few spiral turns return the thread forward to a point one-third the hook shank length back from the hook eye thus establishing the front thread hang point. Cut a two inch length of Polypropylene Yarn from the skein. Split the piece of yarn in half lengthwise. At the front thread hang point use several figure eight thread wraps to tie one half of the split wing-post yarn perpendicular to and on top of the hook. Stand the wing post up by taking 10 to 15 tight thread wraps up the post about 3/16-inch then back down to the base of the

post. Cut about a 5-inch length of body yarn from the skein. Tie the body yarn onto the top of the hook about 1/16-inch back from the wing post. Bind the yarn to the top of the hook with several spiral thread wraps to a point directly above the hook barb. Return the thread to the space between the body yarn tie-on point and the back of the wing post.



2. In neat touching turns wrap the body yarn forward to the base of the wing post and tie it off but do not cut away the yarn tag end as it will be used to build the head of the fly. Cut a barb section one hook gap wide from a turkey feather that has been treated with Fixatif. Fold the feather section in half lengthwise. Round the thicker or back end of the feather section by cutting away the corners. Measure the feather section to equal the length of the hook. Cut away the excess feather from the front of the wing... not from the end you rounded. With the feather section folded in half lengthwise tie it in on top of the hook between the front of the body and the back of the wing post. The sides of the

wing should extend over the sides of the body.

Parachute Hopper.... Tom Regina (continued)



3. Over the wing tie-on thread wraps, tie in one knotted leg to the far side of the body. Repeat the process on the near side for the second leg. While tying in the legs manipulate them so the knot or leg "joint" of each leg extends slightly above the wing and the front and rear leg sections form about a 45 degree angle to the wing. The legs should also flare out slightly to help hold the fly upright on the water. Place a small amount of head cement over the leg/wing tie-in thread wraps and allow it to dry before proceeding.



4. Select and prepare a rooster hackle feather with barbs equal in length to about 1 ½ hook gaps. Tie the feather on behind the hook eye and in front of the wing post, by its bare stem section. The inside, or concave side, of the feather should be either facing up or toward you at this time. Lift the feather up so the bare stem is touching the wing post. Wrap the thread around both the thread post and the bare stem up to the top of the post then back down to the base of the post, thus binding the stem to the wing post. Make an "anchor" thread wrap around the hook in back of and adjacent to the wing post. At this point there should be about 1/8-inch of bare hackle stem exposed above the

thread post. Make the first turn of hackle at the top edge of the thread post in a counterclockwise direction. Make successive turns of hackle directly under and butting up against preceding hackle wraps for a total of about 6 to 8 wraps or to the base of the wing post. Pull the hackle feather down on the near side of the hook and in back of the post. Pick up the thread bobbin and make two or three counterclockwise thread wraps around the base of the wing post trapping and securing the feather to the post. Pull the thread forward and up on the near side of the hook directly behind the hook eye. Cut away the excess hackle feather. Hold the hackle feather barbs in front of the wing post up and out of the way and continue to wrap the body yarn forward to just short of the hook eye to form the hoppers head. Tie-off the "body" yarn and cut away the excess. Build a neat thread head. Whip finish the thread head two or three times. Cut away the thread and apply a small amount of cement to the thread head. Trim the wing post to desired length.

Casting & Tying at the Club.... Tom Regina



At the Thursday June 12 Bull Session starting at 6:30 PM, we will tie a Chernobyl Ant. See page 5 for the schedule at the Saturday, June 21 Casting and Tying Clinic at Art's House. Most everyone will probably be interested in fishing but if there are any die-hard tyers we will tie the parachute hopper. If necessary, we can reschedule the hopper for a later clinic or bull session.

New at the Library.... Bill Parrish

New DVD in the library: Fly Fishing The Great Smoky Mountains National Park; a 2008 production by Angie and James Marsh. A two Disk set on fishing the streams of the Park. Details on streams and fishing methods. Run time about 4 hours. Ref #95