

TROUT FLY OF THE MONTH

PARAMIDGE

Rob Denson ties an almost irresistible dry-fly

NOT SO MANY moons ago, my fishing was equally split between rivers and stillwaters. These days, for various reasons - laziness, lack of fitness, and an uncontrollable desire to have the kitchen sink by my side - stillwater boat fishing accounts for a good 90 per cent of my fishing. However, I'm constantly reminded of many thousands of happy hours on the river by the contents of my stillwater dry-fly box. Interestingly, a high proportion of them are classic river patterns, which, after varying degrees of tweaking, have crossed over with ease and considerable aplomb: the Griffith's Gnat, Deer Hair Emerger, Grizzle Mink, Klinks, and one or two of my own humble offerings, such as the Bare Hare. This month's pattern sits comfortably and confidently alongside them as one of my most consistently successful and deadly stillwater dry-flies.

Ask any seasoned river man for his top five dry-flies and with very few exceptions, the Paradun, in various guises and colours, will be up there. The Paramidge is a Paradun without the tails. Truth to tell, after the tails of several Paraduns were destroyed, I noticed that neither presentation nor catch-rate were adversely affected. The invalids were deposited in my stillwater box for a future use, best unknown to myself.

Around that time, about 15 years ago, I got a call from Ben Dobson at Stocks Reservoir, alerting me to a biblical fall of Soldier Beetles; my bag was duly packed that evening. Conditions were perfect the following morning: a good ripple, overcast and warm. Tackling up with all the calm and control of a seven-year-old at Christmas I noticed the invalid Paraduns, minus their tails, and among them, a couple of ginger ones. A two-fly cast was prepared with my hitherto most successful Soldier Beetle pattern, a red Shipman's Buzzer, and the tailless approximation of a Paradun. The day will live long in my memory: a red-letter day, thanks to a couple of very simple, very effective flies. The Shipman's, as it always does in a Soldier fall, took its fair share of fish. The invalid Paradun was a



Hook Sizes 10-16 Kamasan B170 or similar medium gauge hook
Body Seal's fur (colour of your choice), hare's ear or substitute dubbing
Rib (optional) Tying thread, fine wire or fine twisted mylar/holographic
Post Poly yarn **Parachute hackle** Cock hackle (colour of your choice)



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revelation and was literally hammered to within an inch of its life.

The Paramidge, as I now call it - for no other reason than it rolls off the tongue nicely, and the name appears to already have been in use for similarly styled flies - is so much more than just a Soldier Beetle suggestion. It works wonders for all manner of waterborne insects and terrestrials alike. Viewed from below, it has a very convincing profile and footprint, and, I can assure you, appears very difficult to resist no matter what's on the menu and no matter what stage, within reason, of the life-cycle of the hatch.

The Paramidge also floats superbly well, has a attractive low-riding attitude, is durable, and fairly easy to tie. So convincing is each and every aspect of this fly that I find colour and, to an extent, size to be relatively unimportant; common sense and a little experience will take care of those aspects. All in all, it's about as perfect as stillwater dry-flies get. Confession: I still can't resist tying my Paraduns with tails, though... they look so pretty! **T&S**



This olive seal's fur and hare's ear mix with a grizzle parachute hackle is just one of many colour combinations.

TYING TIPS

- Basic tying sequence: tie in a slim post of poly yarn. Tie in the hackle at the base of the post. Dub the body, starting at the rear and working up to the post. Wind the hackle and tie it off in front of the eye. Dub over the tied-down hackle. Add a blob of varnish to where the post meets the hackle, and trim the post to the desired length.
- Hackle quality is more important than colour - the Paramidge succeeds on its footprint and attitude, as opposed to matching the exact colour and size of the hatch.
- Choose a hackle with a barb length almost the length of the body. Better too long than too short.
- I prefer to crop the post right down - this seems to reduce spinning.