

SKINNY HARE'S EAR NYMPH

Rob Denson ties a pattern which proves that less is best



THE CULL continues. There have been many casualties, not as many as I'd like - a drastic reduction in fly numbers was the aim - but I have at least reclaimed some space in my boxes, if only to refill them with this winter's bright ideas.

Ridding myself of flies that I haven't yet tried in earnest, which could be the panacea on a day that reduces others to tears, seems to be the problem. They all seemed like a good idea at the time; trouble is, many still do. I need to toughen up.

Anyway here's another pattern that's a "keeper", as they say in the dating game. I'm not even going to try to shed light on its provenance; it would only end in tears, or at best, a busy letters page in the next issue. Suffice to say, if it's a simple, skinny, generic nymph pattern you're trying to conceive, then this one ties itself, as I'm sure many of you have found, both before and since it came to my attention in the late 1980s.

It is another of those patterns that's so simple and so effective that it makes you wonder why you bother with anything else. The irony of this kind of simplicity is that one feels that one must surely need something else... just in case. To be fair, we do: a pinch of hare's ear and a twist of tinsel can't be expected to cover everything, although it comes close.

The paradox of this kind of minimalism is that often the fussiest trout can be the most susceptible to the blank-canvas approach. Invariably, a simple, suggestive framework on to which the hungry trout can project its fondest desires is all that's required. Let



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Hook Size 10-16 Kamasan B170 or 175
Rib Medium or fine mirage (colour of choice)
Body Hare's ear/mask
Thread UTC 70

the fish join the dots and see what it wants to see. Trying to join the dots ourselves is often where it goes horribly wrong. Flies like this are the antithesis of close-copy model making and, therefore, I believe, the quintessence of our sport.

If flies of such a simple, almost sensual nature haven't yet seduced you, then give them a try. It can be a leap of faith, but once you make that leap, you'll never look back. All you need is feeding fish. These are nymphs: flies for fish looking for a meal, not an argument or a chase, therefore fish them slowly or statically for best results.

Surprisingly, there's much scope for variation. As always, alter the shape, size and weight of hook to suit the menu, the venue and the conditions. Dress them long, dress them short, add a pinch of sparkle and vary the rib colour. Stick a tail on it... if you must. **T&S**

TYING TIPS

- Try to get a good mix of shades in the dubbing by pinching fur from different areas on the mask.
- Add squirrel, or other spiky, thicker furs to vary the density of the dubbing to further control sink rate.
- Stretch the ribbing material slightly as you wind. This ensures that the rib stays put.