

Pearly Invicta Muddler

Rob Denson ties an artful and suggestive wet-fly



Hook Size 8-14 Kamasan B170 or B175
Butt Mirage or pearl Mylar **Tail** Golden pheasant topping **Rib** Fine silver wire
Body Pearl Ice Dub **Body hackle** Any red/brown/ginger cock hackle
Wing Hen pheasant wing secondary
Head Natural roe deer hair

TYING TIPS

There are many tests here for the tyer: muddler head, matched wing slips, palmering, and last but not least, a well-presented golden pheasant tail. Space prohibits me from elaborating on each item, therefore I suggest using the internet for videos and other instructional articles.



ROB DENSON

has fly-fished for trout for 25 years, visiting all four corners of Britain and Ireland, combining his love of fly-tying, photography and a rolling wave. Web: robdenson.co.uk



Visit www.veniard.com for more information and stockists

PERT AND PERFECTLY proportioned: there's nothing that makes me drool more than well-tied winged wet-flies. Not only do they represent mastery of the fly-tyer's craft, they've been fooling fish for centuries, and continue to do so, and yet few of us can be bothered to tie them.

Sourcing quality wings, selecting matching feathers, trimming matching slips, pinching, looping and ... holding your breath. Even if you're good enough to produce more than one fly per hour there's still the issue of durability. It's nothing short of heartbreaking to see the fruits of your labour looking like matted nasal hair after just two casts.

There's no evidence to suggest that feather wing-slips do a better job of suggesting the delicate, gossamer wings of invertebrates than, say, a bunch of poly yarn, rolled duck flank or squirrel hair, so why bother? Sometimes - and I suspect I'm not alone in this - the satisfaction derived from crafting a winged wet-fly, and then fishing with something steeped in history, tradition and aesthetic beauty, is pleasure enough. Those moments when we are reminded of the simplicity of fly-fishing and why we took up the sport in the first place are worth more than any number of fish.

One of my favourite winged wet-flies at this time of year is the Pearly Invicta Muddler, based on the

formidable Silver Invicta, a true legend that has been catching trout, salmon and sea-trout for the best part of 150 years and shows no sign of letting up. The last word in vague suggestiveness, the Silver Invicta scores so often and so heavily by virtue of it being all things to all fish. Shrimp, sedge pupae, hog louse, fry, corixa - they're all covered.

The muddled, pearly version, while not blessed with the same versatility as the standard, does a few jobs that the standard can't. As per typical Muddler *modus operandi* - top dropper, fished with pace - the fly gets noticed by shifting water and reflecting light. Smaller sizes (12 to 14) can be fished with more subtlety and treated as a *bona fide* suggestion of food, eliciting a feeding response, as opposed to provoking an aggressive response in bigger sizes (8 to 10) fished in the former style.

I like to fish Muddlers on the tail, as you would a Booby when fishing a washing line. If you have an aversion to Boobies, it's a great way to keep middle- and top-dropper flies high in the water for longer when using nymphs and/or suggestive wet-flies to target fish feeding high in the water.

In case you were wondering, Muddlers have no place on the middle dropper. You can try it, to prove the point, and no doubt you'll catch something sooner or later. But a Muddler in the middle will unbalance a cast and cause tangles. 