

# The G12

*Rob Denson admires a soulful muddler*



## TYING TIPS

■ **Arthur says:** Chop up the Glo-brite floss dubbing in 5mm pieces, wind on and then scrub out, before tying in a longish body hackle – don't be scared to add an extra turn or two as the flat rib separates nicely. The scarlet head hackle heats up the dressing and the contrasting cloaked summer duck should extend halfway over the tail.

■ **Rob says:** Muddler heads of this calibre don't just come overnight. Watch muddler demos on YouTube, then practise, practise, practise.

**Hook** Size 8-12 Kamsan B175 or B160  
**Tail** Summer duck (slightly longer) over Glo-brite No.7 orange floss **Body** Glo-brite No.7 orange floss  
**Body hackle** Orange hen or cock  
**Rib** Flat gold **Head hackles** Scarlet hen and summer duck or mandarin flank  
**Head** Chocolate or brown roe-deer hair



**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](http://robdenson.co.uk)

**P**AY ATTENTION, PEOPLE, there's a question later. Your challenge this month, should you choose to accept it, is to replicate the work of Mr Arthur MacDonald. My tip: get up early and don't be too despondent if you fail. Arthur has many years of practice behind him, but more importantly, he has a special touch that makes even the most accomplished tyers turn green with envy. It's not the level of difficulty or the complexity with which you'll struggle - like most of Arthur's patterns, technically, it is standard fare and I've no doubt you'll manage to tie something fishable and effective - it's the gift of life, the "soul" that Arthur imbues in his patterns. That is the hallmark of a great tyer, and it's something you can't teach. All we can do is marvel and practise.

One thing many of us have in common with Arthur is a tendency to knock up a special pattern or two on the eve of a fishing trip: something to suit the conditions or the latest hatch. Nothing beats the satisfaction derived from getting it right. On August 11, 2013 (or it might have been 2012) Arthur was due to fish a slightly out-of-sorts Loch Lochy and took a punt on concocting a beefy, lively-looking muddler to stir things up. It worked like a charm. The G12 quickly became a first choice for Arthur on the lochs at the southern end of the Great Glen: Lochy, Shiel and Arkaig - Arthur's stomping ground.

The pattern came to my attention two seasons ago when Arthur sent me a handful of his favourite flies to photograph. I'd heard of the pattern, but seeing it in the flesh made me want to tie and fish it immediately. There was no way I was going to risk losing Arthur's tying, so I knocked one up myself. Naturally, alongside Arthur's, I was somewhat underwhelmed by my interpretation, but it was close enough, so I took it for an outing on a very dark day at Stocks Reservoir. My default colours for such days on Stocks (and most other upland waters) are claret, claret and claret, and the various shades of claret in between if claret isn't working. Sometimes, though, it pays to go bright, hitting them between the eyes with garish colours. The only way to find out if the lurid stuff is going to get the desired response is to give it a go.

Four fish for 18lb followed in an arm-wrenching late-afternoon session; I think that can be deemed the "desired response". I'd deployed the G12 on the top dropper, but I've had good results since using it on the tail to hold things up - a method Arthur favours, too. Taking the G12 down with a Di3, Di5 or even a Di7 will also work - an alternative attention-seeker - dare I say it? - to the ubiquitous Blob.

Time for that question: have you worked out where the name G12 comes from? Answers on a postcard to the editor. The first card out of the bag wins the fly pictured here. And yes, it's one of Arthur's tyings, not mine. 