

Dunkeld Dabbler

Rob Denson recommends a fly with a rich heritage, proven in bright sunshine



TYING TIPS

- Aim for a slim, lean fly. This is a middle-dropper pattern and needs to cut through the surface layers quickly.
- Check out videos on YouTube for detailed instruction on cloaking Dabblers.

Hook Size 8-12 Kamasan B170 or B175

Tail Yellow cock hackle fibres

Rib Copper wire **Body** Flat gold tinsel

Body hackle Grizzle hen dyed orange

Cloak Bronze mallard, natural or dyed orange **Cheeks** Jungle cock

Thread Fluorescent red or orange



ROB DENSON

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THOSE OF YOU WHO PAY close attention to my monthly musings may have noticed that I can get very excited by solutions to those niggling perennial problems of fly selection. Flies for the middle dropper; flies for bright sunshine; flies for a windy Wednesday; flies for the middle dropper in bright sunshine on a windy Wednesday - you know the sort of thing. A fly that solves one of these problems and puts two or three fish in the net on an otherwise impossible day is worth a whole lot more than a fly that puts 20 fish in the net on an easy day.

Bright sunshine is nearly always a problem, albeit less so in the early part of the season when the sun describes a lower arc and the fish, being cold blooded, must feed in earnest as their metabolism increases with rising water temperature. Any opportunities - usually spring buzzer hatches - are accepted, regardless of overhead conditions.

As we head towards midsummer, the sun approaches its zenith and can beat down relentlessly for up to 14 hours per day. Throw in the high water temperatures faced between July and September and the fishing can be tough. Add wind into the equation and we have issues. Never fear, here's a fly that has quietly but regularly saved the day for me on numerous occasions.

Starting its illustrious history as a fully dressed salmon fly around the mid-19th Century (presumably on the River Tay) before morphing into

a trout fly, the Dunkeld is best known for its exploits on stillwaters. The lochs of Scotland are, of course, its spiritual home, but wherever trout are fished for you can guarantee that a Dunkeld of some description will have taken fish.

The Dunkeld Dabbler has many variations on the theme of colours from the yellow-orange part of the spectrum matched with gold and neatly topped with bronze mallard. Yellow, orange and gold are all solid performers in sunshine and combine superbly well. But there's more: orange is a proven colour for getting a positive reaction from fish otherwise preoccupied with daphnia; a common problem in mid- to late-summer.

Last, but not least, the design, profile and colour scheme make the DD a perfect choice for the middle dropper in a team of three wet-flies. After many years of fishing it almost exclusively in the middle on Orkney's Loch of Swannay, down through Scotland, the North of England's reservoirs, Rutland, Chew and Bewl, I can tell you it's a tough one to beat.

At this time of year, and in the sunshine, it's highly likely you'll need to get down to the fish, but don't be misled by fish taking in the last few inches near the surface and change to a slower line; the chances are they've followed the fly up from a significant depth. Don't expect to break any records at this time of year, but with a DD secured in the middle, you've a damn good chance of avoiding a blank. **TRS**