



## Fishing the Muddler Fly.

Always keep a good selection of these in your fly box.

There are many hundreds of different fly patterns for the Fly Fisherman to choose from and for the inexperienced angler it can sometimes be difficult to decide which pattern to use. You can ask ten fly fishermen which pattern to use at a particular spot and you'll likely get ten different answers. Well, mostly it comes down to experience and personal preference. However there are some fly patterns which are very versatile and this article is about one of my personal favourites.

The Muddler is an extremely versatile fly pattern and can be used on, or beneath the surface with equal effectiveness. It is a great fly pattern for all ranges of expertise and will still catch fish even if not tied particularly well. It can be used when fishing for almost any freshwater or saltwater species. It is just as effective on rivers, lakes, streams and in the sea. You can use it to catch Trout, Arctic char, Atlantic and Pacific Salmon, Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass, Pike, Crappie, Panfish, Tarpon, and almost anything else that swims. It can be bought or tied in an almost limitless range of colors and variations. A few being the Black Muddler, the White Muddler, the Spuddler, the Yellow Marabou, the Muddler Hopper, the Searcy Muddler, the Keel Muddler, the Missoulia Spook and so on. A true Muddler's head should always be made of deer hair and as such is very buoyant. Its buoyancy keeps the Muddler off the

bottom, so it can be fished at all depths by adding different amounts of weight.

Here are some ways to fish the Muddler.

1. Strip it across the water and you'll produce some ferocious takes. Trout especially will follow it for quite a distance. Natural colors can be very effective in bad light conditions.

2. Fish it slowly along the bottom and fool the fish into thinking it's a dragonfly nymph. Alternate between a slow and jerky retrieve.

3. For sea trout use a square cast and a floating line. Over slow water this results in the buoyant fly creating a wake in the surface film, and the fish find this irresistible.

4. When fishing on the surface retrieve in a figure of eight pattern with lots of pauses. The fish will almost always take the fly during a pause.

5. Also, you can try different techniques when the Muddler is on the surface. Twitch and strip it several times then pause and wait. Give it a couple of jerks and then wait a few seconds. It will almost always attract the fish.

Try smaller sizes in the spring and larger ones on summer early mornings and late evenings. The fish seem to confuse these flies with almost anything they like to eat. So go give them a try.

This is just a few ideas of fishing with Muddlers. The possibilities are endless. Experiment with them. In my opinion they are some of the most useful fly patterns available and they will often work when nothing else will.

Happy fly Fishing,

William.