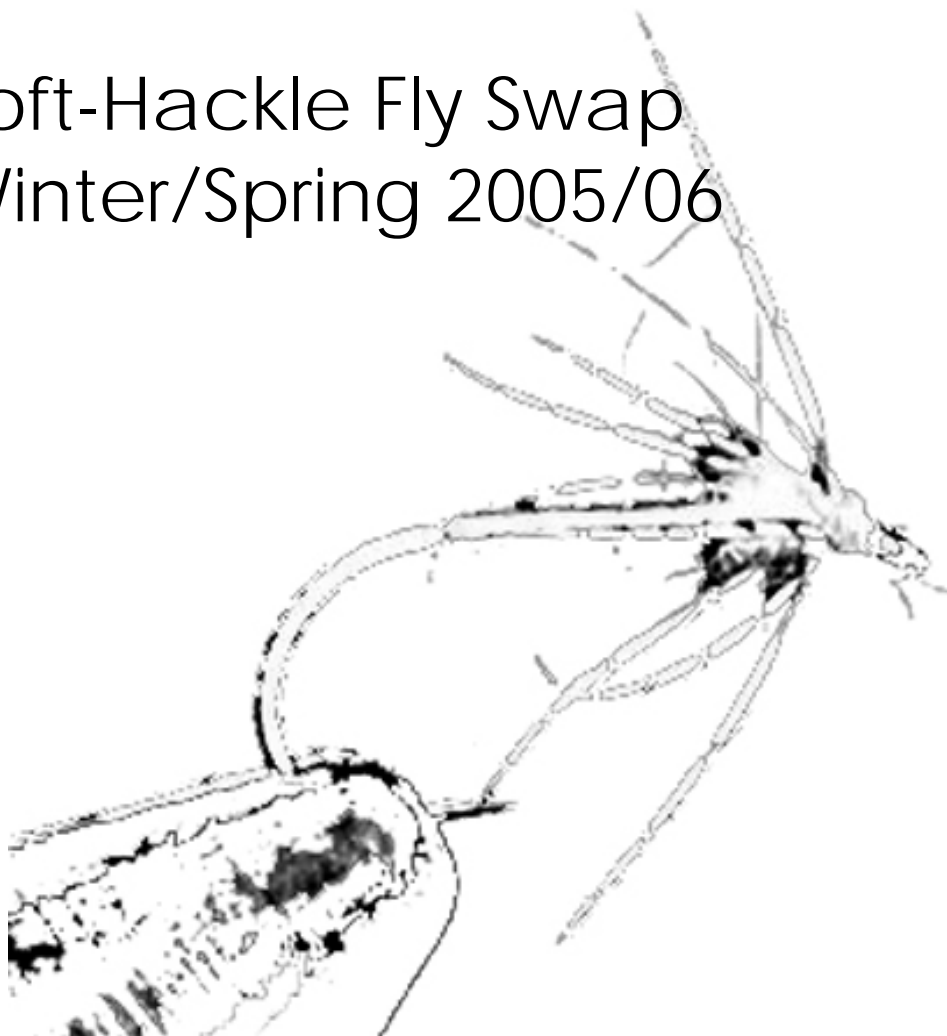


Fly Fisherman Forum  
International Brotherhood of the Flymph

# Soft-Hackle Fly Swap Winter/Spring 2005/06



Organizer: Jim Slattery  
Photography: Hans Weilenmann  
Assembly: Aaron Laing

## FOREWARD

I have been amazed in my short stint as a fly fisherman and tyer at the growth in the popularity of the soft hackle fly. The interest in tying and fishing these simple, diminutive flies has grown slowly from a devoted but small following to the level of mass movement. Indeed, we have come to the point that the mention of soft hackle flies to a stranger in a fly shop the other day elicited the response, "that seems to be the trend now."

This fly swap really represents a coming together of soft hackle enthusiasts from around the world. From Europe, to North America, to Australia the collection of flies included below shows the diversity that is becoming the norm in soft hackle fly design and application. Many of the flies below also demonstrate the appreciation of traditional styles, and some would probably look right at home in the fly boxes of T. E. Pritt, or Edmonds and Lee.

A few thankyou's are in order before moving on to the flies. First and foremost, I am sure all the participants would like to thank Allan Goodwin for suggesting the swap and Jim Slattery for pulling the whole thing together. A very big thanks should also be extended to Hans Weilenmann for his beautiful photography of the flies, and for providing the web space to display these great images. Finally, on a personal note I would like to thank Fran Friesen, for introducing me to the Fly Fisherman Forum and allowing me to join in the fun.

Tight wraps everyone,

Aaron Laing

## Contents

1. 300 Pound Alice – *Charlie Craven* (p. 1)
2. Blue Dun Hackle – *Joe Fox* (p. 1)
3. Blue Hackle Olive – *Wayne Graff* (p. 2)
4. Bradshaw's Fancy – *Robert Culver* (p. 2)
5. Brahma & Olive – *Hans Weilenmann* (p. 3)
6. BWO – *Tim Didas* (p. 3)
7. Candy Cane – *Michael C. Miller* (p. 4)
8. Carey Special – *Gig Azar* (p. 4)
9. Ginger Caddis – *Aaron Laing* (p. 5)
10. Hare's Ear – *John Ruberto* (p. 5)
11. Hen Pheasant & Black – *Allan Goodwin* (p. 6)
12. Hendrickson Pop Top – *Jim Slattery* (p. 6)
13. Iron Blue Wingless – *Jim Slattery* (p. 7)
14. Lawrie's Olive Nymph – *Donald Nicholson* (p. 7)
15. Lil' Dorothy – *Mark Libertone* (p. 8)
16. March Brown – *Robert S. Jones* (p. 8)
17. March Brown Flymph – *Tim Didas* (p. 9)
18. Partridge & Green – *Gordon Siess* (p. 9)
19. Pearsall's Claret Cardinal – *J. Smith* (p. 10)
20. Pheasant Tale – *Dick Walle* (p. 10)
21. Porcupine March Brown – *W. Anderson* (p. 11)
22. Pot O'Gold – *Fran Friesen* (p. 11)
23. PTSH – *C. Stewart Denton* (p. 12)
24. Rainbow's End – *Fran Friesen* (p. 12)
25. Red Fox Squirell – *Jeff Nally* (p. 13)
26. Red Tag – *Allan Goodwin* (p. 13)
27. Starling & Biot – *Alexander Goeting* (p. 14)
28. Starling and Flash – *Jeremy Gubbins* (p. 14)
29. Starling and Peacock – *Steve Crosby* (p. 15)
30. Starling and Purple – *Wade Caler* (p. 15)
31. Wired Body SH – *Chad Gauerke* (p. 16)



### 300 Pound Alice

*Designer: Charlie Craven*

*Tyer: Charlie Craven*

*Handle: Charlie Craven*

**Hook:** TMC 760 SP  
**Thread:** Black 10/0  
**Tip:** Fine Blue wire  
**Tag:** Fl. Orange Thread  
**Rib:** Sm. Blue wire  
**Body:** Purple Hareline and  
Purple Ice Dubbing  
**Hackle:** Black Hen

A great name for a very attractive fly. Charlie, has employed Lagartun blue wire for both the tip and rib of this fly, and added a tag of fluorescent orange 70 Denier UTC thread to offset the dark purple of the body. This fly brings together movement and an attractive colour scheme to create I'm sure could be a killer.

### Blue Dun Hackle

*Designer: James Leisenring*

*Tyer: Joe Fox*

*Handle: Ashbourn*

**Hook:** Mustad 3906  
**Thread:** Primrose Yellow  
**Tail:** Light Blue Dun Fibres  
**Tag:** Tying Silk  
**Rib:** Very Narrow Flat Gold  
**Body:** Natural Mole  
**Hackle:** Light Blue Dun Hen



From James Leisenring's, *The Art of Tying the Wet Fly* (1941). The body is mole spun on Pearsall's primrose yellow silk, and takes on a lovely olive-dun colouration when wet.



### Blue Hackle Olive

*Designer: Wayne Graff*

*Tyer: Wayne Graff*

*Handle: Dubbn*

**Hook:** #16 Mustad 94840  
**Thread:** Uni Olive-Dun 8/0  
**Body:** Olive Rabbit Dubbing  
**Hackle:** Light Blue Dun Hackle.

A classic style of fly matching a good many of the *Baetis* species, this fly could probably do service world wide.

### Bradshaw's Fancy

*Designer: Traditional*

*Tyer: Robert Culver*

*Handle: Mendingline*

**Hook:** #14 Daiichi 1530  
**Thread:** Red 6/0  
**Tail:** Red Uni Yarn  
**Body:** Peacock Herl  
**Hackle:** Black Hen



This fly is a true classic dating back at least to the late 1800's and based on the famous grayling fly of the same name. Like the red tag, this fly is a proven fish catcher. According to some sources (both English and Scandinavian) this fly is sometimes tied with a tuft of red wool over the front of the fly as well.



### **Brahma & Olive**

*Designer: Hans Weilenmann*

*Tyer: Hans Weilenmann*

*Handle: Flytier*

**Hook:** #12 Kamasan B405  
**Thread:** Olive 12/0  
**Body:** Olive Mole  
**Hackle:** Brahma Hen

A soft hackle in the classic mould, Hans has created this fly using a very fine and strong Benecchi thread, mole fur dyed olive in picric acid, and the recently introduced Brahma hen from Whiting Farms. The touch dubbing style that Hans has used on the body gives this fly its almost translucent character and should provide plenty of life in the water.

### **BWO**

*Designer: Tim Didas*

*Tyer: Tim Didas*

*Aka: SgtMajUSMC*

**Hook:** #18 Mustad Sig. R70  
**Thread:** Pearsall's Gossamer  
Olive-Yellow (waxed)  
**Rib:** Fine Gold Wire  
**Body:** Working Thread  
**Thorax:** Dark Dun Dubbing  
**Hackle:** Sparse Dark Dun Hen



The idea of "matching the hatch" with soft hackles has really come to the fore in recent years and Tim's Blue Wing Olive fits nicely into this category. Tim purchased the yellow/olive silk thread from old stock at Carl Coleman's shop in Rochester, NY, noting that the yellow-olive "makes a better olive when waxed than does the yellow Pearsall's." Tied short on the shank, this fly "offers the appearance of a smaller fly with the advantage of a larger hook gape."



## Candy Cane

*Designer: Michael C. Miller*

*Tyer: Michael C. Miller*

*Handle: Flyrodder*

**Hook:** #12 Mustad 94831  
**Thread:** Black 14/0  
**Rib:** Orange Silk overlaid  
w/ Fine Silver Wire  
**Body:** Red Silk  
**Thorax:** #34 Fiery Orange  
Scintilla  
**Hackle:** English Grouse or  
Partridge

Michael has designed this fly using Pearsall's Marabou silk floss for both body and rib—three strands for the body and two for the rib. The body silk and rib materials are tied in just behind the thorax position with the rib materials on the underside of the hook. The red floss is then untwisted and wrapped to the rear and back to the tie-in point, binding the ribbing material beneath the body floss in the process. The red floss is then tied in and then the ribs brought forward such that the silver rib overlaps the orange floss. Michael twists the orange floss tightly to prevent it from spreading as it's brought forward. The dubbed thorax and hackle are applied in the conventional manner. His final suggestion, "Go fish it!!"

## Carey Special

*Designer:*

*Tyer: Gig Azar*

*Handle: Gig*

**Hook:** #12 Mustad 9672  
**Thread:** Black  
**Body:** Peacock Herl (2 stands)  
**Hackle:** Pheasant Rump



It's amazing how flies developed in one part of the world find a home in another. Gig's *Carey Special*, originally developed in British Columbia and the US Pacific Northwest in the mid 1920's ostensibly for use in stillwaters, has found a home on the streams and rivers of Australia. The original had a body of pheasant herl ribbed with black silk, but the peacock herl used by Gig is now the standard style.



### Ginger Caddis

*Designer: Aaron Laing*

*Tyer: Aaron Laing*

*Handle: skunkaroo*

**Hook:** #16 Daiichi 1550  
**Thread:** Pale Yellow 14/0 Griffiths  
**Rib:** Fine Copper wire  
**Body:** Bleached Ginger Squirrel  
**Thorax:** Fiery brown seal (optional)  
**Hackle:** Ginger "Reverse Furnace"  
Partridge Shoulder

I developed this fly after a frustrating outing to a favourite spot on the lower Adam's river in British Columbia—fish were rising everywhere except to my dry caddis patterns. Guessing that the fish were targeting the ascending insects and emergers, I designed and tied a few flies to imitate the dominant ginger caddis hatch in this particular pool. This soft hackle was one of these flies. Fished with a lifting presentation, this fly took a good number of rainbows up to about 2.5 lbs and large numbers of 10-12" whitefish. This fly can be tied with an optional small fiery brown seal thorax if necessary, but I find it fishes just as well without it.

### Hare's Ear Soft Hackle

*Designer: John Ruberto*

*Tyer: John Ruberto*

*Handle: Troutfrog*

**Hook:** #14 Dai Riki 730  
**Thread:** Grey 6/0  
**Rib:** Fine gold Wire  
**Body:** Dark Hare's Ear  
**Hackle:** Mottled Hen Cape



A new take on a classic style. The Hare's Ear has been catching fish for well over a century and this one looks a right killer.



### Hen Pheasant & Black

*Designer: Allan Goodwin*

*Tyer: Allan Goodwin*

*Handle: Highlander*

<b>Hook:</b>	Std. Sproat Wet
<b>Thread:</b>	Black
<b>Rib:</b>	Silver Wire
<b>Body:</b>	Tying Silk
<b>Wing:</b>	Hen Pheasant Primary
<b>Hackle:</b>	Starling or Natural Black Hen

Allan's Hen Pheasant & Black, shows a balanced marriage of the soft hackle and winged wet traditions. The wing holds a prominent place relative to the body of the fly, yet does not overpower the soft hackle fibres here tied as a collar.

### Hendrickson Pop Top

*Designer: Jim Slattery*

*Tyer: Jim Slattery*

*Handle: Jim Slattery*

<b>Hook:</b>	10-14
<b>Thread:</b>	"Jasper"
<b>Tail:</b>	3 Pheasant Tail Fibres
<b>Body:</b>	2 Mahogany & 1 Dark Pheasant tail spun on tying silk
<b>Thorax:</b>	Light Dubbing blend Spun on Tying Silk
<b>Hackle:</b>	Dun Hen
<b>Head:</b>	Dubbing Blend



Jim's simple looking fly is actually a little more complex than the casual glance would indicate. The body covers just 3/5<sup>ths</sup> of the fly. The hackle is applied with a full turn at the rear of the thorax, followed by 2-3 turns palmered through the thorax, and finally fronted with a full turn just behind the dubbed head of the fly. The thorax and head dubbing is a blend of creamy yellow/orange and pale pink, spun on jasper, primrose or gold silk. Jim selects the size based on any visible hatching duns, basically going up one size. This fly is meant to be fished on the rise, and is often taken very aggressively.





### Iron Blue Wingless

*Designer: Jim Slattery*

*Tyer: Jim Slattery*

*Handle: Jim Slattery*

**Hook:** #14  
**Thread:** Claret  
**Tail:** Two Short Honey Dun  
Cock Fibres  
**Tag:** Claret (tying thread)  
**Body:** Dark Mole  
**Hackle:** Honey Dun with Red  
Points

Yet another traditional soft hackle. Here Jim has substituted honey dun hackle and tail for the original white hen fibres in the tail and jackdaw or starling for the wing. An attractive fly that hints at an egg laying female.

### Lawrie's Olive Nymph

*Designer: Donald Nicholson*

*Tyer: Donald Nicholson*

*Handle: DonaldN*

**Hook:** #14 Partridge BL "Ideal"  
**Thread:** Pearsall's Yellow  
(Well Waxed)  
**Tail:** Olive Brahma Hen  
**Rib:** Fine Gold Wire  
**Body:** Tying thread  
**Thorax:** Olive Camel Dubbing  
**Hackle:** Furnace Hen Hackle



Donald has given us a nice looking fly imitative of many Baetis species, the dark centre of the furnace hackle suggest a heavier and well defined thorax region. The waxing of the Pearsall's yellow gossamer thread is a very traditional method of achieving the correct hue to imitate the natural.



### Lil' Dorothy

*Designer: Mark Libertone*

*Tyer: Mark Libertone*

*Handle: Soft-hackle*

**Hook:** Std Wet Fly  
**Thread:** Pale Yellow  
**Body:** Pale Orange  
Embroidery Thread  
**Thorax:** Light Cahill Hareline  
**Hackle:** Pale Ginger or Cream

This has all the hallmarks of being a great little sulfer or small stonefly imitation. Embroidery thread offers a great source of potential soft hackle material as Mark has demonstrated here with the use of a single strand of pale orange embroidery thread (DMC 722) for the abdomen

### March Brown

*Designer: Robert S. Jones*

*Tyer: Robert S. Jones*

*Handle: Capn' Bob*

**Hook:** #10-12 Mustad 3906b  
**Thread:** Pearsall's Purple  
**Tail:** Hen Pheasant Hackle fibres  
**Rib:** Sm. Oval Tinsel  
**Body:** Mole (blue, claret and fiery brown)  
**Wing:** Hen Pheasant Primary Slips



A "Clyde Style" winged soft hackle designed for Henry's Fork. Robert's unusual choice of colour for this fly is based on the observations of the naturals by noted author Mike Lawson. In order to get the right shade Robert hand blends the dubbing (2 parts blue, to 1 part claret and 1 part fiery brown). Because the March Browns emerge as fully formed duns well beneath the water's surface, Robert feels that the winged soft hackle is the best fly for the job. He writes, "These emerging duns present such tempting morsels that the trout sometimes completely ignore the floating duns." Robert likes to fish these flies up and across, "throwing upstream mends to reduce drag, allowing the fly to sink in the water column." As the fly swings at the end of the drift it rises to the surface and "oftentimes this is when the trout will hit it."



## March Brown Flymph

*Designer: Tim Didas*

*Tyer: Tim Didas*

*Handle: SgtMajUSMC*

**Hook:** #8 TMC 200  
**Thread:** Orange 14/0  
**Tail:** Pheasant Tail (3 fibres)  
**Rib:** Brown Thread  
**Body:** Amber Seal/  
SLF/Antron blend  
**Thorax:** Fiery Brown  
**Hackle:** Ruffed Grouse

Tim has tied this fly "low water" style. The abdomen is a blend of amber seal, fiery amber SLF, and Orvis Amber Antron blend. The rib is actually Gutermann Col #593 sewing thread. For the thorax Tim has used fiery brown woodchuck from Fred Reese's Trout Shop. The hackle can be either Ruffed Grouse or furnace hen, but here he has used the grouse. He writes, "This is a good fast water pattern, and has proven very effective on the Delaware."

## Partridge and Green

*Designer: Traditional*

*Tyer: Gordon Siess*

*Aka: LI Fly Fisher*

**Hook:** #14 Tiemco 3769  
**Thread:** Green Pearsall's  
Gossamer Silk  
**Body:** Working Silk  
**Thorax:** Hare's Ear Dubbing  
**Hackle:** Gray Hungarian  
Partridge



A classic little jewel that belongs in every fly box. The silk really gives this style of fly its life like lustre in the water, while the hare's ear thorax keeps the hackle alive in even the heaviest flows.



### Pearsall's Claret Cardinal

*Designer: Jim Smith*

*Tyer: Jim Smith*

*Handle: Jim Smith*

**Hook:** #12-14 Std. Nymph  
**Thread:** Dark Grey 10/0  
**Rib:** Sm. Gold Ultrawire  
**Body:** Pearsall's Claret Silk  
**Hackle:** Light Partridge

This is Jim's variation on the old Partridge and Orange. Of this fly he writes, "This is my go-to spring and summer pattern for trout. I cast it at an upstream angle allow it to dead drift back watching for any hesitation or quick movement of the leader during the drift. This is also an excellent small stream pattern as well as a killer for bream during the summer months."

### Soft Hackle Pheasant Tail

*Designer: Dick Walle*

*Tyer: Dick Walle*

*Handle: Phantomriver*

**Hook:** #14 1xl  
**Thread:** Red 8/0  
**Rib:** Small Copper Wire  
**Body:** Pheasant Tail  
**Thorax:** Yellow Synthetic  
**Hackle:** Fine Barred Partridge



Another variation on the soft hackle pheasant tail, this one tied with the addition of a pale yellow thorax for sulphur and PMD hatches.



### Porcupine March Brown

*Designer: William Anderson*

*Tyer: William Anderson*

*Handle: William Anderson*

**Hook:** #14 Orvis 1510  
**Thread:** Rust 8/0 Uni  
**Body:** Porcupine Guard Hair  
**Thorax:** Whitlock's SLF/Squirrel  
**Hackle:** Partridge

The Porcupine March Brown is a sleek bodied soft hackle that puts an unusual material to good use. The porcupine guard hair body is lightened in a peroxide mix for a three day period.

### Pot O'Gold

*Designer: Fran Friesen*

*Tyer: Fran Friesen*

*Handle: Rainbow*

**Hook:** #16 TMC 2487 or 2457  
**Thread:** Cream or Gold 8/0  
**Body:** Dark Yellow Silk Floss  
**Thorax:** Yellow/Gold Blend  
w/ Gold Crystal flash  
**Hackle:** Ginger Hen



A little gem of a fly, the golden yellow silk gives this fly a beautiful lustre. Fran uses two strands of the French Largartun dark yellow floss. The floss is tied in at the start of the hook bend, leaving an inch long "tail" of floss. The thread is brought forward, binding down the floss along 2/3rds of the body length. The floss is then wrapped rearward to the tail, then forward and secured. The "tail" of floss left at the rear is then pulled forward over the back, tied in at the thorax and trimmed. The thorax is blended from three shades of dubbing in yellow and golden colours with snippets of gold crystal flash. A single or double wrap of ginger hen finishes the fly.



### Pheasant Tail Soft Hackle (PTSH)

*Designer: C. Stewart Denton*

*Tyer: C. Stewart Denton*

*Handle: Gandolf*

**Hook:** Mustad 3906b  
**Thread:** Pheasant tail  
**Rib:** Copper Wire  
**Body:** Pheasant tail  
**Thorax:** Peacock Herl  
**Hackle:** Starling

Stewart ties these "in the round" and uses a reddish copper wire for the rib. The starling hackle used usually includes the "fuzzy" portion of the feather for its movement in the water. For Stewart the use of the softer feather barbs is a compromise, "I sacrifice long life for better movement." As for hackle density he writes, "I don't try to tie them very sparse, [I'm] not picky about how sparse the soft hackle ends up."

### Rainbow's End

*Designer: Fran Friesen*

*Tyer: Fran Friesen*

*Handle: Fran Friesen*

**Hook:** #14 TMC 101  
**Thread:** Cream/Purple 8/0  
**Tail:** Red Goose (6 Barbs)  
**Body:** Hot Orange/Bright Yellow/  
Insect Green  
**Thorax:** Peacock Swords (2)  
**Hackle:** Peacock Blue Hen or  
Webbed Rooster, and Purple  
Whiting Popper Pack



A bright fly for a bright day? Fran tied this fly to represent her alter ego, "Rainbow", used on fly fishing boards and chat rooms. The body is tied in equal sections of Hareline dubbing in the colour and order indicated. Cream thread served as a base for the rear two thirds of the fly, while the purple is reserved for the darker thorax and head. Fran suggests "one or two wraps" of both hackle feathers, but I find the sparseness of the single wraps used in the swap flies looks quite sharp.



### Red Fox Squirrel Soft Hackle

*Designer: Dave Whitlock*

*Tyer: Jeff Nally*

*Handle: Manik*

**Hook:** #14  
**Thread:** Brown  
**Rib:** Copper Wire  
**Body:** Red Fox Squirrel Dubbing  
**Thorax:** Red Fox Squirrel and  
Dark Grey Dubbing  
**Hackle:** Partridge

One of Dave Whitlock's favourite patterns, here Jeff has given it the soft hackle treatment. A great, buggy looking fly.

### Red Tag

*Designer: Traditional*

*Tyer: Allan Goodwin*

*Handle: Highlander*

**Hook:** #16 Sproat Bend  
**Thread:** Black  
**Body:** Peacock Herl  
**Hackle:** Ginger Hen



This fly is a traditional fish catcher originally hailing from Northern England and Scotland that has also proved to be one of the most popular flies in Tasmania. I've personally fish this same fly for cutthroat in British Columbia with great success.



### Starling and Biot

*Designer: Alexander Goeting*

*Tyer: Alexander Goeting*

*Handle: Lone Tree Guy*

**Hook:** #14 Dai-Riki 070  
**Thread:** Black 12/0 Griffiths  
**Tail:** Natural Red Hen  
**Rib/Body:** Olive Goose Biot  
**Thorax:** Olive Hares Ear Plus  
**Hackle:** Starling

A late addition to the swap, Alexander came through quickly with this great looking soft hackle. The goose biot creates both the abdomen and rib, while the tail serves to imitate a trailing shuck.

### Starling and Flash

*Designer: Jeremy Gubbins*

*Tyer: Jeremy Gubbins*

*Handle: JeremyG*

**Hook:** #16 Tiemco 5262  
**Thread:** Olive  
**Rib:** .004" Gold Wire  
**Body:** Green Flashabou  
**Thorax:** Olive Hare's Mask  
**Hackle:** Adult Starling



A bright little soft hackle that would probably serve well in a midge hatch. Jeremy has counter wrapped the wire rib to strengthen the normally fragile flashabou.





### Starling and Peacock

*Designer: Steve Crosby*

*Tyer: Steve Crosby*

*Handle: Okieflyfisher*

**Hook:** #16 Mustad 94840

**Thread:** Black 8/0 Uni

**Body:** Peacock Herl

**Hackle:** Starling

It doesn't get much more classic than this. If you substituted snipe for the starling, Steve's fly would be a "Black Snipe", featured in T.E. Pritt's *North Country Flies* (1886). Steve writes, "I chose [this] particular fly for a couple of reasons. For one thing, there is something about peacock that fish seem to like. It works well as a midge emerger and midges are a staple on the tailwaters that I fish."

### Starling and Purple

*Designer: Wade Caler*

*Tyer: Wade Caler*

*Handle: Hipper*

**Hook:** 3906b  
**Thread:** Black 8/0  
**Tag:** Flat Gold Tinsel (also underbody)  
**Rib:** Fine Gold Wire  
**Body:** Purple Floss  
**Hackle:** Starling



Wade has tied what amounts to an updated version of the classic purple and snipe. Wade has laid down a layer of flat gold tinsel to serve as both tag and underbody. As the fly becomes wet the floss becomes translucent, and the tinsel underbody causes the fly body to "glow" from within. As a nice touch he's also added a wing from the tip of the starling hackle. Sylvester Neme's in his book *Soft-Hackle Fly Imitations* (1991) identified this as a "Glanrhôs" wing, named after a beat on the Wye in Wales.



### Wired Body Soft Hackle

*Designer: Chad Gauerke*

*Tyer: Chad Gauerke*

*Handle: Chad Trout*

**Hook:** #16 Scud  
**Thread:** Black 8/0  
**Body:** Fine Olive Wire  
**Thorax:** Gery Dubbing  
**Hackle:** Olive Partridge

The final fly in the series is a wired body soft hackle by Chad Gauerke. The wire adds weight while strengthening the body against the ravages of sharp trout teeth.