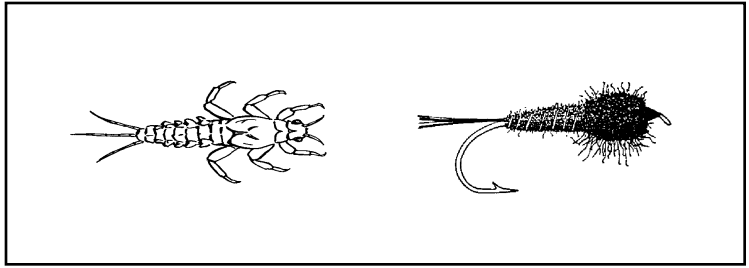


## MAYFLY PATTERN TYPES



### **GOLD-RIBBED HARE'S EAR** A classic mayfly nymph.

The Gold-Ribbed Hare's Ear, a very old pattern, has the general shape of a mayfly nymph, and is perhaps the most popular wet fly in America.

It is tied with the fur from a hare's mask (the face and ears of a hare), which varies not only in stiffness and length of fur, but also in shades of color: from black, through brown, to tan. Most mayfly nymphs are some shade of brown or olive, and hare's masks dyed olive are available. Hare's masks, readily available and inexpensive, are a versatile source of tying material for many other flies.

The GRHE is usually tied in sizes 6 to 18, and in many variations, including weighted with wire or a bead head, with a wingcase, ribbed with tinsel, and sometimes with legs of feather barbs.

This pattern type should be adapted to simulate the insects in the waters you fish.

The most important consideration when simulating insects is size, with shape a near second, and color a distant third.

The following pattern is tied "in-the-round", à la Charlie Brooks, and therefore it looks the same from any angle.

The variation of the GRHE presented here is tied with fur of two colors, rather than the usual uniform color, for instructive purposes: in order to point out that the body of a mayfly nymph is composed of three parts, each of a different size, shape, and function: the abdomen, concerned with digestion, reproduction, and respiration; the thorax, containing the wings and legs and the muscles that will operate them; and the head, containing the eyes, mouth parts, and antennae. Note that the body proportions are 4/8 abdomen, 3/8 thorax, and 1/8 or less head.

### **MATERIALS LIST for a GOLD-RIBBED HARE'S EAR, size 12**

- HOOK:** Mustad 3906 (Regular wire & length, TDTE, Sproat bend, not forged, bronzed). Size 12. (Alternatives: Daichi 1500; Eagle Claw L057; Targus 9300, 3759; Tiemco TMC 9300, TMC 3759).
- THREAD:** Monocord, 3/0. (Flymaster, 6/0, for smaller sizes). Black or dark brown.
- TAIL:** Hare's mask dark-colored guard hair.
- RIB:** Gold wire, about 0.006 inch diameter. One piece, 2 to 3 inches long.
- ABDOMEN:** Hare's mask light-colored fur.
- THORAX:** Hare's mask dark-colored fur.
- LEGS:** Picked-out thoracic fibers.
- HEAD:** Thread color.

## TYING

Please study these instructions before tying this fly.

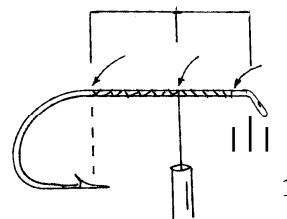
A bullet • precedes each tying step.

After each step the tying thread will be placed where it will be needed next.

Some of the drawings isolate, simplify, and illustrate only the tying step being discussed.

### 1. Hook Placement

- Place the heel of the hook in the vise with its shank parallel to the tying bench and its barb showing, so that the barb and the point can be used as landmarks.

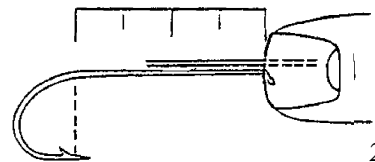


### 2. Thread Base

Note that on a hook with a Sproat bend the rear of the shank is approximately over the mid-point between the hook's barb and point, and not over the barb as it is on a hook with a round (Model Perfect) bend.

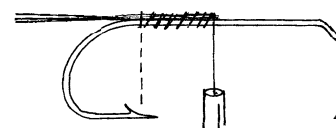
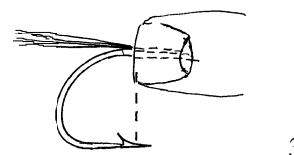
To facilitate precise placement of the wraps, keep the shortest practical length of thread between the bobbin holder and the hook.

- Attach the thread to the shank one eye-length behind the hook eye (the one eye-length point), wrap in an open spiral to the rear of the shank, then forward to mid-shank, and half-hitch (Fig. 1). A half-hitch is made when relaxation of thread tension might result in the loosening of the previous work. It is placed precisely at the point where the thread will be needed next.



### 3. Tail

- Select eight to ten dark guard hairs from a hare's mask and, while holding their tips aligned, cut them free close to the hide.
- Remove the underfur with a fine-toothed comb, or, while holding the tips of the guard hairs with one hand, flick the butt ends until the underfur separates.
- Measure the guard hairs for length, 1/2 to 3/4 shank-length (Fig. 2), and "mark" with your thumbnail.
- Move the "marked" tail to the rear of the shank (Fig. 3), grasp the tail and the hook bend with your other hand, and then tie on the tail butts, on top, at mid-shank.
- Holding the tail tips slightly up and to the near side (to counteract the torquing action of the tying thread), bind the tail fibers, on top, to the rear of the shank.
- Trim excess tail butts.
- Advance the thread to mid-shank and half-hitch (Fig. 4).

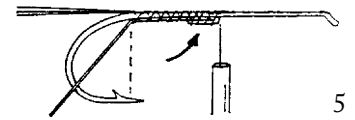


## GOLD-RIBBED HARE'S EAR

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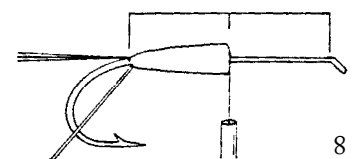
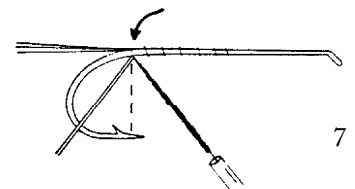
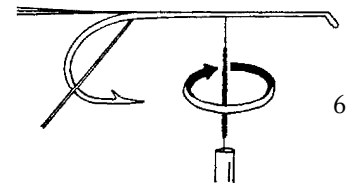
### 4. Rib Tie-on

- Bend about 1/8 inch of one end of the 2 to 3-inch long piece of fine gold wire at a right angle.
- Place the wire underneath the shank, and tie it on at mid-shank with several wraps rearward.
- Double back the bent tip and secure with several wraps forward.
- Bind the wire, under the shank, to the rear of the shank.
- Advance the thread to mid-shank and half-hitch (Fig. 5).



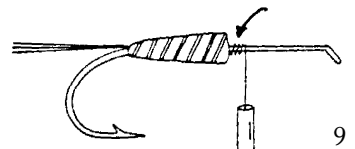
### 5. Abdomen

- Cut, close to the hide, some light-colored fur, both guard hairs and underfur, from a hare's mask, and mix thoroughly.
- Dub a small amount of this fur mixture, just a wisp!, onto the tying thread, barely covering the thread. Start dubbing about 1/2 inch below the shank to minimize pricking yourself on the hook point. Dub in a counter-clockwise direction, looking from the bobbin holder to the shank, so that the dubbing will tighten rather than loosen when wrapped on the hook (Fig. 6).
- Cement the hook shank. When possible, wrap dubbed bodies into wet cement for increased durability.
- Wrap the thread to the rear of the shank in such a way that the junction of the bare thread and the dubbed thread arrives at the rear of the shank (Fig. 7). This minimizes bulk at the rear of the abdomen.
- Wrap the dubbing forward in a tight spiral to mid-shank, and then back and forth as necessary to build a firm, thin, tapered abdomen that is only one layer-of-dubbing thick at the rear and several layers thick, about 1/16 inch, at mid-shank, and half-hitch (Fig. 8).



### 6. Ribbing

- Wrap the gold wire forward in an evenly-spaced, open spiral with about 1/16 inch between wraps (usually five to six wraps).
- Finish with several wraps around the shank in front of the abdomen to anchor the wire, trim the excess and flatten the tag against the shank, and cover with thread (Fig. 9).
- Trim the abdomen so that the tips of the fur project no more than a length equal to the maximum width of the abdomen, about 1/16 inch. These will simulate the gills, which are located on the abdomen of a mayfly nymph. Trimming the abdomen is easier now before other materials are added.

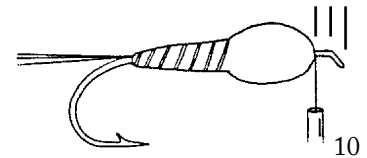


## GOLD-RIBBED HARE'S EAR

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### 7. Thorax

- Make a dubbing mixture of dark-colored fur, both guard hair and underfur, from a hare's mask.
- Cement the thoracic area of the shank.
- Dub an oval-shaped thorax that is about twice the diameter of the front end of the abdomen, about 1/8 inch, wrapping to the one eye-length point, and half-hitch (Fig. 10).

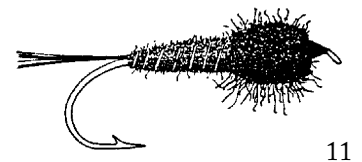


### 8. Head

- Build a small, tapered thread head, closing any gap in the hook eye, and finish (tie off) with three half-hitches under the rear of the head, or with a whip-finish knot proceeding from thorax to hook eye (Fig. 11).
- Carefully apply thinned cement to the thread head.

### 9. Legs

- Pick out a few free ends of fur from the thorax with a bodkin or dubbing teaser (Fig. 11).



### 10. Trimming

- Trim the thorax so that the tips of the fur project no more than a length equal to the maximum width of the thorax, about 1/8 inch. These will simulate the legs, which are located on the thorax (Fig. 11).

## AN ENTOMOLOGY NOTE

Metamorphosis is defined in Webster's Collegiate Dictionary as "a marked and more or less abrupt developmental change in form or structure of an animal occurring subsequent to birth or hatching."

Insects that undergo incomplete metamorphosis, e.g., mayflies and stoneflies, have only three life stages: egg, nymph, and adult. The immature and the adult forms resemble each other.

Insects that undergo complete metamorphosis, e.g., caddisflies, have four life stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. The immature (the larva and the pupa) and the adult do not resemble each other. The immature resemble a worm, a different form entirely.

A familiar example of complete metamorphosis is the butterfly. The egg hatches and a caterpillar, the larva, emerges. After a growing period the caterpillar encloses itself in a cocoon and becomes a chrysalis, the pupa. It develops and, at the proper time, emerges as an adult butterfly!

## FISHING

The Gold-Ribbed Hare's Ear is usually fished "dead drift" but, befitting its general usefulness, can be fished in any wet fly presentation.