

Mink Wing Caddis

Submitted by Jerry Snider

From: Solomon, Larry and Leiser, Eric. 1977.

The Caddis and the Angler. Stackpole Books.



LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: moderate to difficult

MATERIALS:

Hook: Mustad 94840, 94833, TMC 900BL, TMC 100, (or your favorite standard dry fly hook) in sizes 16-20.

Thread: 8/0 Uni-Thread, color to match dubbing and wings.

Body: Wapsi Super Fine dubbing in tan, brown, olive or black; or a clipped hackle body in the above colors; or mink under fur in the above colors; also can use pheasant tail fibers or peacock hurl.

Wing: Mink tail guard hairs in black, mahogany, gray, or tan.

TYING INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAN MINK WING CADDIS:



Insert TMC 900BL #18 hook in vise and attach tan thread base.



Dub tapered body of Super Fine tan dubbing to within 2 hook eye lengths of hook eye.



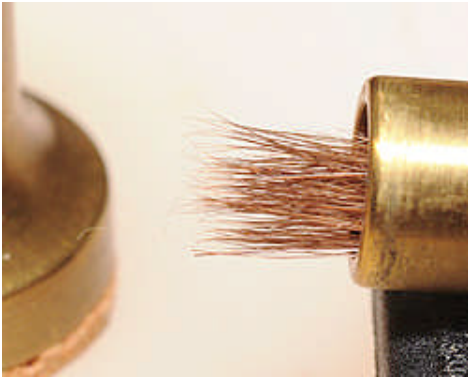
Select mink tail color of choice



In this instance, a tan mink tail is used. Select a clump of guard hairs and cut off at very base.



Remove **ALL** under fur from guard hairs. Any under fur **NOT** removed will act as a cushion and it will be impossible to anchor the already slick guard hair wing in place with thread. Note the large amount of under fur removed from this small clump of guard hairs. Tip: Save the under fur for great dry fly dubbing!



Use a small hair stacker or an empty cartridge case to evenly stack the wing.



Measure wing length. Wing should extend a bit beyond the bend of the hook.



ATTACHING THE WING IS THE MOST DIFFICULT STEP IN TYING THIS PATTERN. The guard hairs are quite slick, and if not firmly attached the entire wing will pull off with just a slight tug. Tie in wing clump with several tight turns of thread. If you are heavy handed and 8/0 is too thin, use 6/0 thread for this step. If tying in the clump is a problem, try tying in the guard hairs in three clumps each clump a third of the original wing size. Tie a wide thread base on the wing to serve as a platform for hackle to be added later. To anchor wing in place, place a tiny drop of super glue on a dubbing needle and apply to thread. Let dry.



Carefully trim wing at same angle as hook eye.



The resulting head area will be thick and truncated. Don't fret. This is just as much of a signature of this fly as is the clipped elk hair in the head region of an elk hair caddis.



Wrap thread to rear of thread platform and attach a high quality brown dry fly hackle.



Wrap only 2-3 turns of hackle and tie off. Complete with a whip finish and add a small drop of head cement.

HISTORY:

Solomon and Leiser's 1977 "The Caddis and the Angler" was one of the first modern references dedicated exclusively to caddis flies for the fly fisher. This work appeared a few years before Gary LaFontaine's major work, "Caddisflies," published in 1981 by Nick Lyons Books. Prior to this, Troth's Elk Hair Caddis and the Henryville Special were pretty much the common adult stage caddis patterns used by most fly fishers. The patterns in Solomon and Leiser's reference are still great flies today, especially for small caddis (micro-caddis) flies. My personal favorite from this reference is the Mink Wing Caddis.

I have caught brooks, rainbows, browns and grayling on this pattern, and have used it very successfully in Alaska, Montana, Wisconsin, Michigan,

Pennsylvania, Arkansas, North Carolina, Indiana and Ohio. If you see a few small caddis on the water, or require a generic small fly, this is the pattern to use.

The dark caddis late evening hatches that begin just after the completion of the Hendrickson hatch on the Mad River can be imitated by the Mahogany Mink Wing Caddis or the Black Mink Wing Caddis. To tie this pattern, use a # 18 hook, a peacock hurl or pheasant tail body wrapped with fine copper wire, chestnut or black wings, and dark brown or medium gray hackle. (See photo below)

