



Click on the link to view the video: <https://youtu.be/a4BY31uGhI4>

Materials (*substitute as necessary*)

Hook: Size 14 Daiichi 1120 Scud

Bead: 5/64" Magic Brown

Thread: Wine, UTC 70

Gills: White Uni Stretch or Midge Gill Antron Yarn

Body: Wine Thread

2nd Rib: Fine Copper Wire

1st Rib: .05mm Anti Static Bag

Coating: Flybox Brushable UV Lacquer

Head cement for final thread wraps

Comments

After 25 years of fishing the abundant trout lakes of the Southern Interior region of BC, there is without doubt as to what hatch Brian Chan looks forward to the most. When chironomids begin hatching off the South Thompson River in late February, and most lakes still remain iced over, he will be fishing chironomids on his favourite lakes in short of 2 months. One question Brian gets frequently asked is about tying realistic or imitative patterns versus suggestive or attractor style ones. He acknowledges a few influences when he ties Chironomid patterns for lake fishing. Firstly, trout in lakes have a short time period to check out the fly patterns before it considers to bite or not. Another essential scrutiny is how fast at which aquatic insects and other invertebrates move through standing water. The majority of still-water trout food sources are slow swimmers or move in short bursts of speed. Chironomid pupae simply rise up vertically through the water. Another factor is water clarity; how visible the food sources and imitations of them are seen at depth by the fish. You would want to match size and color as closely as possible to the real bugs. Take into consideration whether you are fishing early in a particular insect emergence or towards the tail end of the hatch will help in selecting the right fly pattern.

Chironomids or midge fishing is an engaging, artistically pleasing way to fly fish. Sit in an anchored boat in shallower depths of waters of 3 to 5 meters where most hatches occur; but it's not uncommon to be anchored in waters of 12 meters. Cast out a floating fly line, and a leader length varying between 3 to 7 meters, with or without an indicator, with a pupal pattern, wait for it sink to the desired depth, then begin a slow hand twist retrieve to take up a slack and pause regularly. Pay close attention to your fly movements and its feel; once the trout is fooled, the fly takes off! Another way is using a full sinking line when fishing at depths of water over 7.5 meters (25 feet). The idea is to imitate a chironomid pupa motion as it swims from the bottom of the lake to the surface. With the same slow hand twist retrieve, slowly bring in your line.

Many species of chironomids have more than a one-year life cycle which means larval stages that must over-winter in the lake. The larvae are worm-like with distinct body segmentation. These larvae live in the bottom of the lake and can reach upwards of 25 mm in length. Midges, the first chironomids to hatch, are very small. Midge patterns, which are hard to imitate, are in sizes #18 to #22. Larger chironomid hatches are in sizes #12 to #16. The timing for peak hatches is determined by the water temperature which varies from lake to lake. Optimum temperature for hatches is 10 degrees to 15 degrees. Predominant larval colours are maroon, and red. They are often referred to as "bloodworms" because of their blood red coloration due to the poor oxygen environments at lake bottoms. Other colors include shades of green and dark brown.

You can use body materials like Super Floss, Larva Lace, acetate floss and appropriately coloured yarns. Many other material variations are available such as scudback, flashabou, liquid lace and even rust brown thread to say the least. Try ribbing your patterns with fine silver, copper or gold wires, and you can go as far as to use double rib patterns such as silver and red. Chironomid larvae have tiny prolegs at either end of their body, so you may want to use a small tuft of marabou as a tail. It is best to finish off the pattern with a coat of shiny hardener such as Sally Hansen's.