

## SEPTEMBER - THE BLACK FOAM BEETLE



HOOK: Size 12, 14, 16 dry fly.

THREAD: Black, 8/0.

BACK: Black foam cylinder/booby cord (diameter to suit hook size.)

BODY: Peacock herl.

HACKLE: Black hen

If you are tying this fly yourself, be sure to choose a foam cylinder which will have sufficient buoyancy to float the hook. Test it in a glass of water before use. If it is drawn under by your fluorocarbon leader, don't worry, it will catch equally well when retrieved with a slow 'figure-of-eight' just beneath the surface

I prefer the smaller sizes of this pattern, especially size 16. Many insects the fish take from the surface are much smaller than that but at least a size 16 hook gives you a fighting chance of landing a good trout. The only problem with beetle patterns is that they are very difficult to see on the water. Some tyers will add a white or brightly coloured wool 'sighter' to the fly to aid visibility, I think it's best to lift if I see a fish rise in the general area of the fly. Nine times out of ten the rise will have been to your fly.

*Below: A selection of beetles spooned from a West lake trout.*



Given good weather, tactics during September can be much the same as the previous month, especially if black gnats, sedges and crane flies continue to appear. Apart from the foam beetle, a size 16 black dry fly or the same size Griffith's gnat will often fish well if the fish are at or near the surface. Figuring out what the fish are taking could be half the battle and I will nearly always spoon the first fish I kill. Drop the spoon contents into a small white plastic dish half full of water and give it a gentle stir. Unfortunately, we may be no further forward if there are no stomach contents to examine so it will be a case of carry on as you were!

If the weather becomes cold and windy, a team of nymphs or spiders fished off a floating or midge-tip line and fished slowly should put one or two fish in the bag. There may also be one or two fish taking the larger fry, especially in the margins. A larger version of the deer-hair fry could work for these trout.

***Phil Bilbrough***