

JUNE - THE DAMSEL NYMPH



HOOK: Size 10 - 12.

THREAD: Olive 6/0.

WEIGHT: Optional – lead wire or flat lead under thorax area.

TAIL: Olive Marabou

BODY: Dubbed olive marabou.

RIB: Fine gold wire.

WING CASE: Olive yarn.

THORAX: Dubbed olive seal's fur or substitute, well picked out.

During June and July on a nice day, you will probably see a few blue damsels flying around. The blue flies are the males with the females a drab olive in colour. When mating, the pair often fly just above the water surface and the trout will sometimes chase after them, although with little success. Unfortunately, the general lack of weed beds in our two lakes means that damsels are quite scarce here but imitations can be very effective. Damsel flies have a large aquatic nymph which swims to shore when it is ready to hatch into the

adult fly. It will usually swim just below the surface, looking like a small fish. It is now when it becomes an easy target for the trout which can take them enthusiastically with a lot of commotion at the surface. The nymph can vary in colour from light green to dark brown, but a mid-olive is probably the most popular colour to try. When they reach dry land, the nymph will crawl out and after a short while the adult fly will emerge.

On days when there is not much showing at the surface, the leaded version is a good 'search' fly to have on your leader, let it sink well down before beginning a steady 'figure-of-eight' retrieve. A good alternative is an olive damsel nymph tied with a gold bead at the head, this is a great fly whether damsels are hatching or not.

There are quite a few patterns which imitate the blue damsel adult, it seems little used, but it can be excellent at Hallington. That could be because the fish have never seen anything like it before, rather than the fact that it is a good imitation! Its basis is a foam daddy-long-legs but with blue instead of tan foam.

During the latter half of June and into July, you may come across fish feeding on pin fry. These will be perch or dace fry which are only about 15 - 20 mm in length. They are semi-transparent with prominent eyes, a silver belly and red around the gills. During calm conditions fry can be seen dimpling the surface in large shoals and the trout will not be far away. Try a Sinfoil's Fry, Peter Ross, Butcher or a Silver Invicta, all of which look like small fish. A small floating fry using deer hair or white foam fry are also worth a cast. Most flies mentioned in previous months will continue to work, especially those to imitate midge pupae which are now larger and in a wider variety of colours.

From the end of May for a couple of months there will be some Mayfly hatching at the surface. These large upwing flies are easily imitated but I have generally found that the trout seem to be quite scared of such a large floating fly. The fish will often ignore them or just splash at them. Having said that I have spoken to other members at Hallington and some have had good fishing with dry mayflies. It is still worth trying a floating imitation if you see fish taking them but a nymph imitation such as Walker's Mayfly Nymph will probably produce more hook-ups.

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