



# Fly of the Month

## Scott Cesari

*2006 PA State Fly Tying Champion*

*2006 Federation of Fly Fishers World Champion*

**October, 2011**

HOOK: dry, size 14

THREAD: black

BODY: black dubbing

POST: white poly yarn (or other suitable material)

HACKLE: black

**W**elcome to the fly of the month! As I was trying to decide which fly to feature this month, it occurred to me that I've covered dries, nymphs, emergers, and streamers so far. What's been missing? Terrestrials! And what better terrestrial is there than a good ol' reliable ant pattern! My personal favorite is a black parachute ant, so that's the fly I'm going to present in this month's column. And don't forget about our fly of the month contest, either! Remember to bring your fly to this month's meeting. I'll collect them, judge them based on the criteria below, and choose a winner. The winner will be announced at the following month's meeting and will receive their fly mounted under a glass dome, a certificate of achievement, first pick from the prizes on our monthly raffle table, and, of course, bragging rights. The contest is a great way to hone your tying skills, win some great prizes, and have some fun in the process. I encourage everyone to participate. And now, without further ado... **The Parachute Ant**

### TYING STEPS

1. Attach the thread to the hook at the eye and create a thread base to the bend. Return the thread to a point about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the shank length behind the eye.
2. Take a piece of poly yarn and tie it in on top of the hook, with the bulk of the length of the yarn extending forward over the eye of the hook.
3. Now establish your post. I like to do this by pulling the piece hanging over the eye straight up and kinking the base of it into a 90 degree angle by pressing my thumbnail firmly against the yarn at the tie in point. Then make a few wraps tight against the front of the post to help maintain it in a 90 degree attitude. Now reinforce the post by making 5 or 6 horizontal wraps up the base of the post then 5 or 6 more horizontal wraps back down. This gathers the post fibers together to keep them manageable. Trim the butt ends of the yarn on an angle behind the post and cover with thread. Wrap back to the bend.
4. Dub a small ball for the abdomen. Then dub half a ball for the thorax. Stop at the post, don't dub in front of the post just yet. Also, make sure to keep a distinct break between the abdomen and the thorax.
5. Now tie in your hackle feather. Hold the feather behind the hook at the post with the tip toward the rear of the hook. The feather should be held at a 45 degree angle. Tie in the butt end of the feather in front of the post. Once it is secure, hold it straight up along the post, then secure it to the post by making 5 or 6 horizontal wraps up the base and then 5 or 6 wraps back down to the shank, the same way you did when you initially reinforced the post in step 3. Of note, your hackle barb length should be about  $\frac{3}{4}$  the length of the shank of the hook, and make sure to tie in your feather so that a small piece of bare quill is exposed above the horizontal wraps you made when you secured the feather to the post (this will help prevent the hackle from splaying when you begin wrapping it.) Trim the butt ends and secure with thread.
6. Now finish dubbing the front half of the thorax ball.
7. Begin wrapping your hackle. Make horizontal wraps counter-clockwise in touching turns down to the ball of dubbing, 5 or 6 wraps should do it (alternately, you could tie in 2 hackles and make 3 or 4 wraps with each hackle. This has the advantage of making a denser cluster of hackle.) To tie off, finish the wrapping with the feather on the far side of the hook, angled downward. Tie the feather off in front of the dubbed thorax (again, if you use 2 hackles, tie each one off in this manner wrapping one and tying it off, then the other.)
8. Whip finish, add a drop of glue at the knot to secure. Trim the post to length (about  $\frac{3}{4}$  shank length, as a rough guide.) Your parachute ant is now ready to fish (or enter in our fly tying contest!)

For the contest, these are the specific criteria I will be looking for:

- Abdomen and thorax should be symmetrical and equal
- There should be a distinct break between the abdomen and the thorax
- Hackle should lie in the horizontal plane and should not splay above the post or below the shank of the hook
- Barb length should be roughly equal to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the shank length

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions at [smcesari@epix.net](mailto:smcesari@epix.net) or 610-730-7928. Good luck - I hope to see many of your flies for the contest! Until next time...

