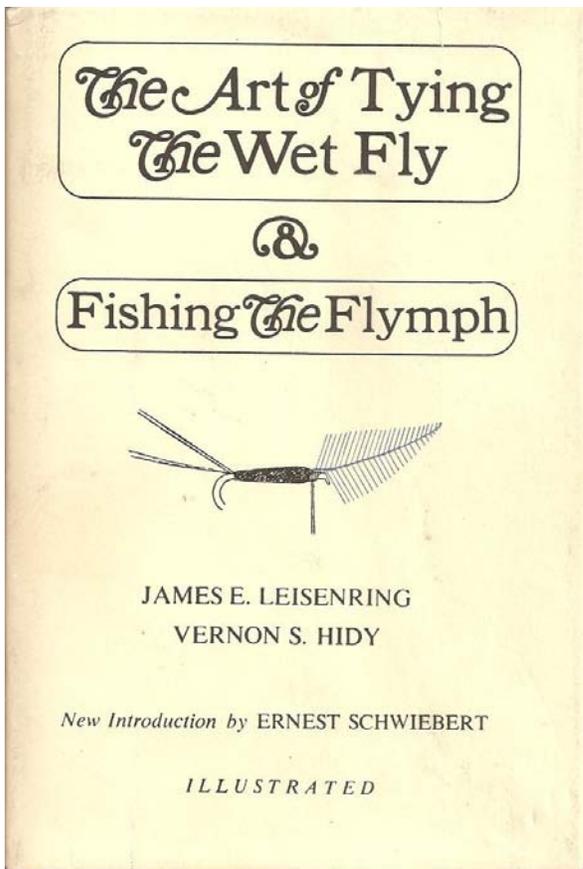


REVIVING AN OLD TWIST ON FLY BODIES

By Jim Clark

Last fall we held a tying session at Project Healing Waters West Bradford that I called the “I hate dubbing session.” The reason for this was that both participants and volunteer trainees alike just had trouble getting just how much, or how little, dubbing is required for creating a neat body. Lots of practice will eventually cure this, but most of our folks only tie at our sessions. I started the class by passing around a box of a dozen or so wets and nymphs, and asking if anyone could tell me what kind of fur dubbing was used on them. It was a trick question, as there was not a hair used. All of those nice tapered fuzzy bodies were constructed of several feather fibers twisted around the tying thread. I had left out any made with pheasant tail or peacock herls as not to give any hints. This style of tying has much to recommend it. Best of all, if you tied a dozen flies with two fibers each, the bodies are all the same size, and you don’t have to try to gauge the fuzzy on your fingertips. Also, if you are using one

or two fibers, the tying thread shows through plainly, so you could use the same feather with differently colored threads and create a slew of different effects. Three or more fibers, and this effect diminishes. The flies were tied with Canada goose tail or crow secondary for Leisenring’s Black Gnat or ants, mallard flank dyed wood duck for two-toned nymphs like sulphurs, and olives tied with dyed turkey or pheasant. Any feather with fibers long enough to meet your needs will work.



I gleaned this technique from reading “The Art of Tying the Wet Fly and Fishing the Flymoph” by Leisenring and Hidy. I never saw the original before I went into the Service, but it was reprinted in 1971, and I think I picked up my copy in ’72 on my first trip to Eric Clapp’s Exton Sport Shop shortly after my discharge. There are lots of nuggets in this little volume, and I still hackle my wets and nymphs Leisenring’s way. Once you start playing with twisted fiber bodies, it will

A CLASSIC

likely dawn on you that there is probably no such thing as a totally useless feather.



CANADA GOOSE TAIL, LEFT, COVERT, RIGHT.

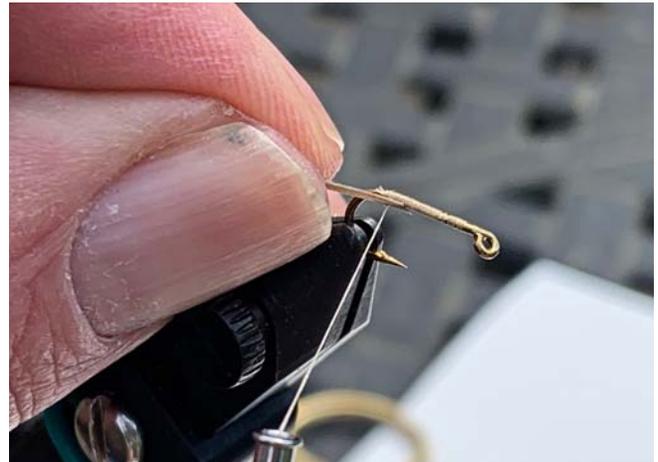


DYED TURKEY SECONDARIES

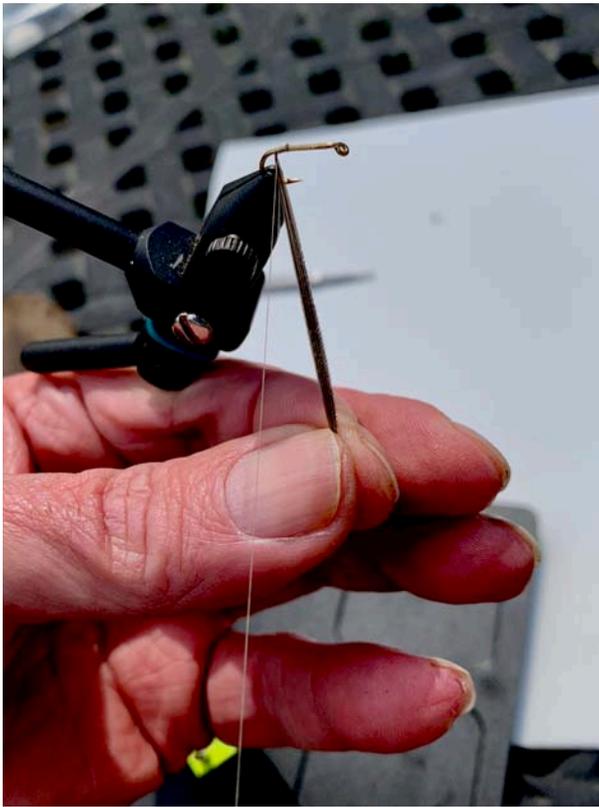
Canada geese provide a wealth of neat stuff, from CDC, to the black tail feathers, shoulders and wing coverts. If you don't hunt, it is not all that hard to scrounging a breasted-out carcass from hunting pals. The best stuff is scrounged or "lightly bought." Lightly bought would be my last visit to Jack Mickiewicz, when I intended to buy a half dozen white turkey secondaries for dying, but left with sixty pairs and a "Here, this will keep you busy." Took about a week to dye the bulk of them, and I have been distributing them to PHW folks, and it cost a pittance.



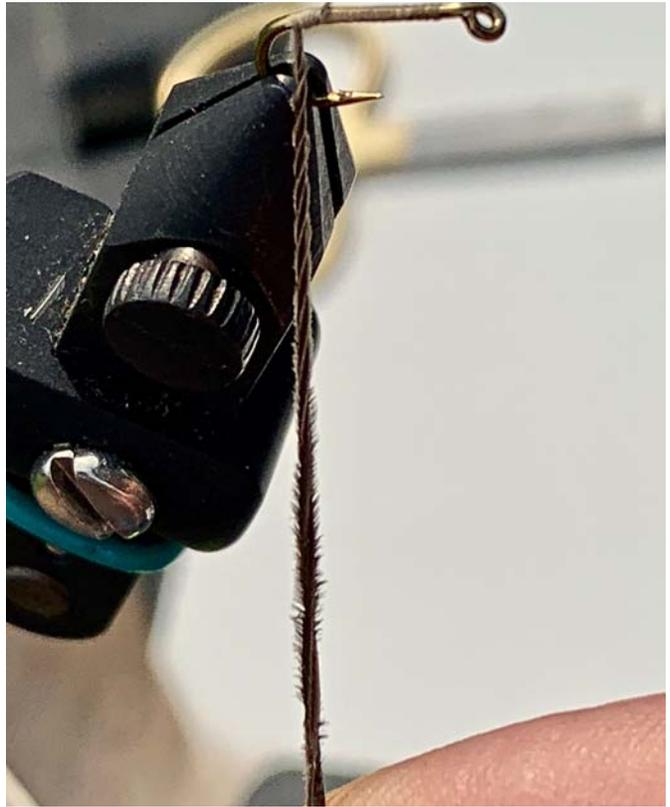
CUT A FOUR FIBER SLIP FROM CANADA GOOSE COVERT.



AFTER TRIMMING OFF SMALL SECTION OF WEAK FIBER TIPS, ATTACH SLIP WITH SHINY UNDERSIDE OF FEATHER FACING YOU.



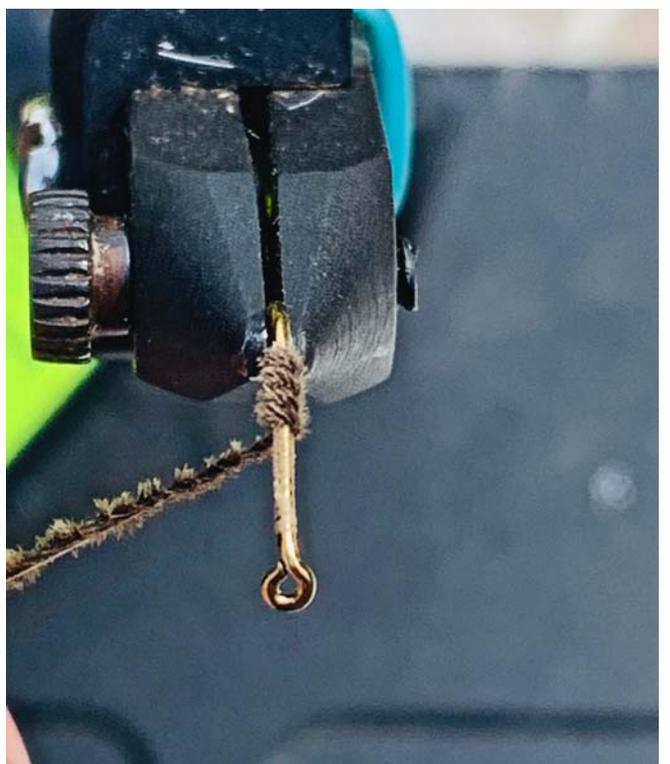
**LAY THREAD IN MIDDLE OF SHINY SIDE,
AND FOLD SLIP AROUND THREAD.**



**TWIST SLIP CLOCKWISE AROUND THREAD. IT
WILL START TO FORM A ROPE RIGHT WHERE IT
COMES OFF OF THE HOOK.**



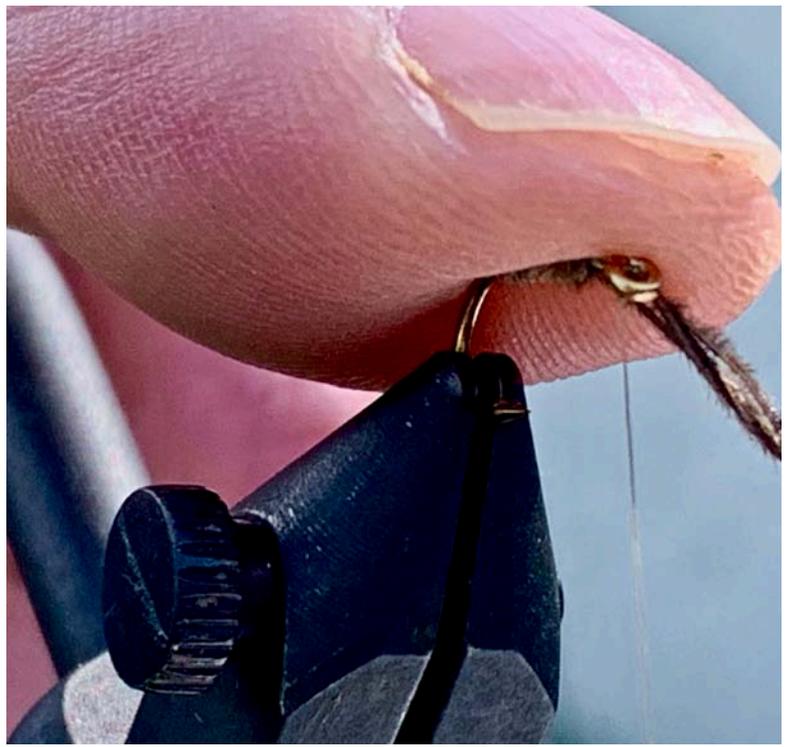
TAKE TWO TURNS, CONTINUE TWISTING.



AFTER TWISTING, TAKE 2 MORE TURNS.



CONTINUE BODY IS AS LONG AS YOU NEED



LAY FINGER ATOP BODY AT EYE SO FIBERS SPRING AWAY FROM THREAD.



TIE OFF AND TRIM



DARK CAHILL



BLACK GNAT



BWO



PARTRIDGE & ORANGE

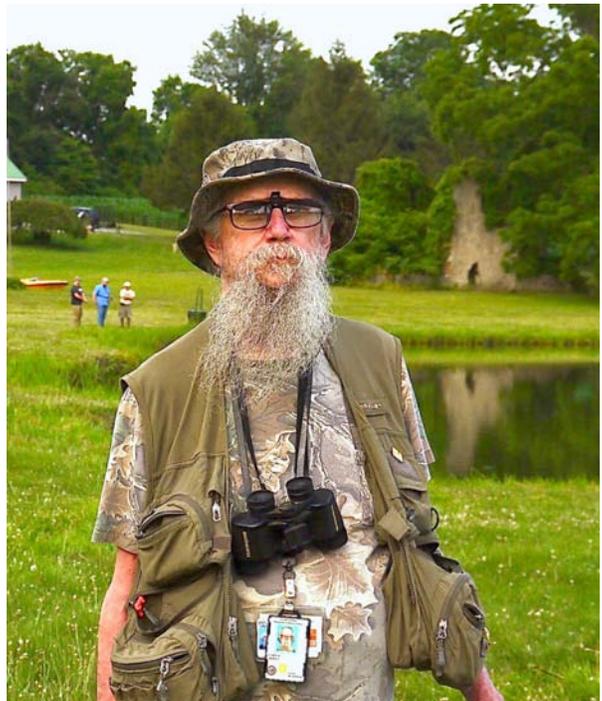


SEVEN WET BEAUTIES



BIO

My family settled in the Great Valley in the 1860's, my great-grandfather on the headwaters of West Valley Creek, his brother a mile or so east, in the Valley Creek watershed. My dad fished for native brookies on W. Valley until 1950 when that section was channelized for pasture, destroying the fishery. I was given a fly-tying kit for my 13th birthday in 1962, validating Gary LaFontaine's quip, "I was a self taught fly tyer, which means I had an idiot for both instructor and pupil." The kit went down the creek in a flood on my first day of USAF basic training in June, 1968. I joined VFTU in 1979, and have been going downhill ever since...



JIM CLARK

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