

BLUE CHARM

(HAIRWING VARIANT)



One or two flies are synonymous with the world of salmon fishing, and non-fishers know the names, the Blue Charm is one of the most famous.

In its' feather wing version, or as this hairwing variation it is as successful today as it was a century ago. It ties and fishes well in smaller sizes for sea-trout.

This version is intended as a starter for novice tyers, and is simplified by the omission of the yellow floss tag and ostrich butt. Otherwise, it's an excellent fishing fly, with an embellishment of a modern material, MirrorFlash for cheeks along the squirrel wing.



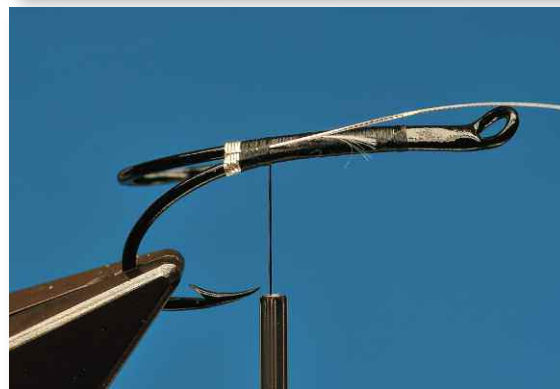
Set a double hook into the vice and lay a firm base of tying thread down the shank ...



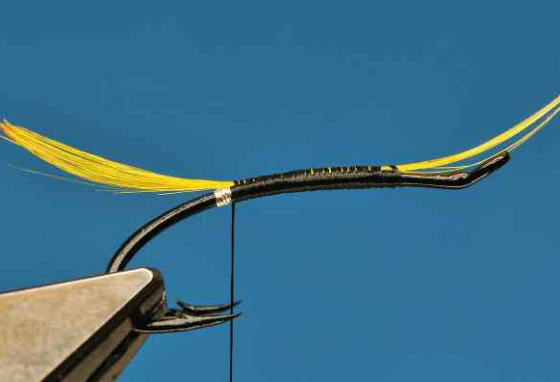
... catch in a fine oval silver tinsel for the tag and ...



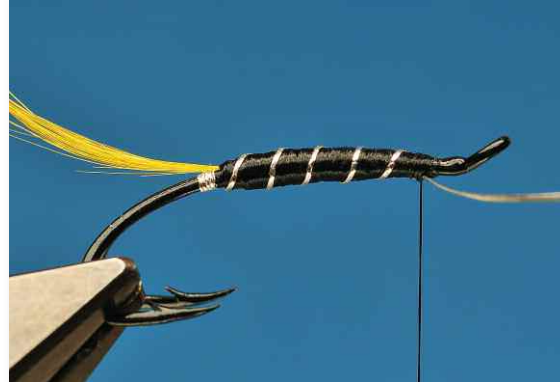
... make four turns rearwards, away from the eye. Bring the tinsel up between the 'crotch' of the two hooks, lay over and across the four turns and secure along the top of the shank.



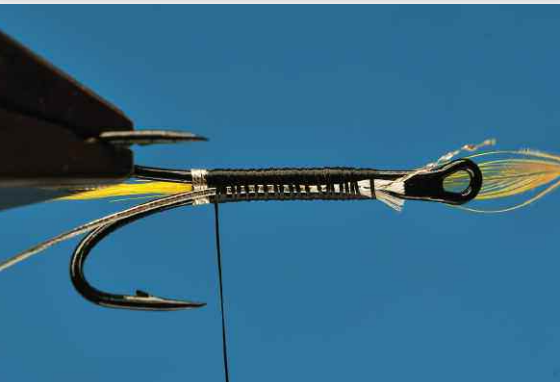
Bind the tinsel down along the length of the shank to just behind the eye.



Select a Golden Pheasant topping feather, and tie in on top of the shank ... it can help to keep all the fibres together to wet the feather with a bit of spittle. Again, bind down the residue along the length of the shank.



Bring the medium silver rib forward in open, even turns, and finish at the same point as all the other body materials.



Now catch in a length of medium oval silver tinsel, rotate the hook in the vice and tie the tinsel in on the underside of the shank ...

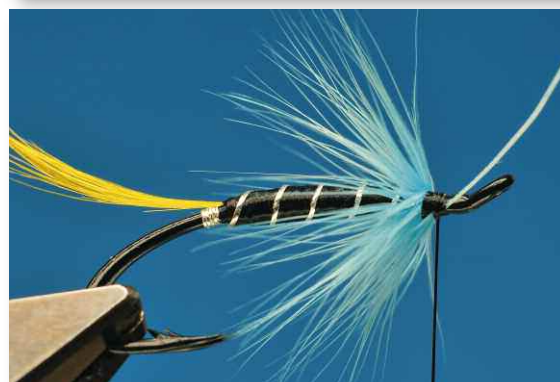


Select a medium to dark blue hackle, stroke the fibres to have them standing out from the stem at right angles, and tie in by the tip. Strip bare the butt of the hackle stalk, leaving about 1" of fibres to wrap onto the hook.

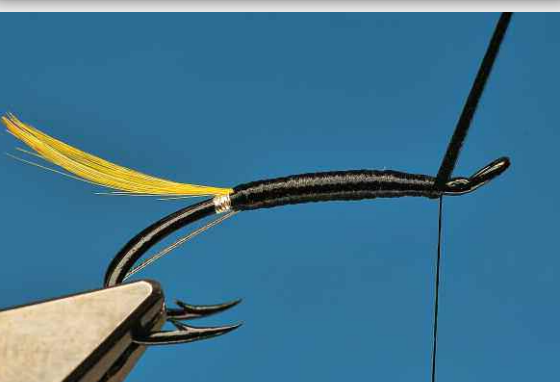
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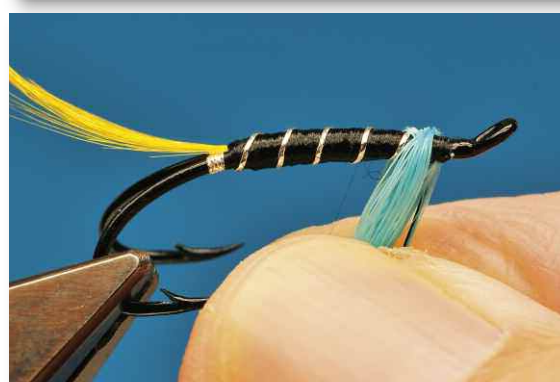
... wrapping the waste down along the length of the shank, as previously.



Wrap the hackle for three or four turns at most, and as you wrap, gently 'persuade' the fibres to sit back towards the bend, this sounds more difficult than it actually is in practise ... don't make overlapping turns, one in front of the other will seat the hackle nicely.



Tie in a length of black floss at the eye, and wrap it as smoothly as possible back towards the point where the tail and tag are tied in, and back towards the eye, secure and trim off the waste ends. there should be a small gap between where all the body materials finish and the hook eye.



... once the hackle is secure, wet your fingers and drag all of the hackle fibres below the line of the shank ... see left.



Don't take any messing about from the hackle! Make it do what YOU want it to do, largely to sit nicely on the underside of the shank.

Take a Grey Squirrel tail and select a small bunch of hair for the wing. Ideally the white tips will be short for a small fly, these are found closer to the base of the tail, usually.

Make three or four turns of thread around the bunch of hair, and then take ONE turn solely around the bunch itself.

This will keep the wing seated on top of the shank, instead of flaring around to the sides. After this turn is made, make a couple of turns tight underneath the front of the bunch, between it and the shank. This acts as a locking turn on the hair. Trim away the waste squirrel fibres and add a couple of strands of MirrorFlash on either side of the wing.

All that remains now is to shape the head of the fly with waxed thread, and with as few turns as possible.



Varnish the head with a couple of coats of varnish to complete.

In summary, this fly is a simplified version of the Blue Charm, but even in this format we have used a wrapped hackle instead of a beard, which makes for a far more attractive fly. It

is no accident either that the hackle just reaches the hook points. The addition of the MirrorFlash cheeks is an inexpensive way to liven up the fly, in a way similar to the effect Jungle Cock cheeks can have, in this fly we have used Blue Krinkle MirrorFlash.