

The Professor

by Rich Mlodzik*

The Professor is one of my favorite wet fly patterns. A nineteenth century English pattern, fashioned, so the story goes, when a professor ran short of flies while fishing one day. He tied a piece of buttercup petal to a hook and used some grass for a wing.

A student from Shabazz High School, I was guiding, introduced me to this fly. We had caught a few trout on dries and streamers. We came to a long deep pool and I told her to try a fly of her choosing.

She picked a Professor because it was so pretty. She caught 7 brook trout, including a 13" fish, in the next half hour. I have carried this pattern in my fly box for years and never gave it much thought. That has since changed. Because it is so pretty!

Hook: #8 - #16 Mustad 3906B TMC 3761

Thread: 8/0 White 6/0 Black

Tag: Fine Gold Tinsel (optional)

Tail: Red Hackle Fibers

Rib: Oval Fine Gold Tinsel

Body: Yellow Floss

Throat: Brown Hen Hackle

Wing: Barred Mallard Breast or Grey Fox guard hair(see variation below)

Tying Directions:

1. Tie in white thread and dress hook back to hook point
I like to use white thread to tie the body. It won't bleed through the floss like a dark thread sometimes will.
2. Tie in tag back to bend. Wrap forward 4 or 5 turns. (optional)
Tie off. Do not cut excess; it will be used for rib.
3. Tie in red hackle fibers for tail.

**Rich Mlodzik is a longtime CWTU member who was the Workday Chair and is still actively involved with many CWTU activities. Rich is a recognized master fly tier who loves fishing in SW Wisconsin. He can be reached at mjmrpm@charter.net*



Figure 1. Steps 1 - 3.

4. Wrap thread forward 2 eye lengths behind eye. Tie in yellow floss.
Wrap floss back to tail, then forward to tie in point. Tie off and clip excess.



Figure 2. Step 4

5. Wrap rib forward. Tie off and clip.



Figure 3. Step 5

6. Tie in a small bunch of brown hen hackle for throat.



Figure 4. Step 6

7. Tie off white thread. Tie in black thread.
8. Tie in 2 matched slips of mallard breast feathers for wing, Concave side facing each other.
A small drop of head cement at the wing tie-in point after the first couple of wraps of thread will make a more durable fly.
9. Clip excess wing and finish head.
I like to use black nail polish for a glossy head.



Figure 5. Steps 7 -9, The Professor

Grey Fox Guard Hair (variation) – Foxy Professor

A variation I use is Grey Fox guard hair for the wing. Grey Fox is a very fine hair and gives the fly more movement in the water. I have also seen this pattern tied with Grey Squirrel Tail for the wing.



Foxy Professor

Note to Rich Mlodzik: Great fly Rich! Thanks for sending it! Bob Hunt introduced me to the Little Professor(size 12) one day on a spring pond. We caught many Brookies with it. I still carry it with me and often use it as trailing fly in a tandem streamer rig. The Little Professor looks like The Professor, but its just smaller. Keep those flies coming!

John Gremmer