



## THE GOLDEN SQUIRREL

*by John Gremmer*

There is something about jungle cock on a streamer that gives me confidence that it will catch a fish. I love the beauty of the old streamer designs of the first half of the last century. In some ways fishing wet flies and streamers has become somewhat of a lost art. 21st Century fly fishermen seem to be divided in to two camps---dry fly or nymph fishers. In my mind the complete fly fisher knows how to fish the three types and when to do each.

Royce Dam, Wauwatosa, created the Golden Squirrel in 1953 specifically for fishing Brook Trout streams. It has become his signature fly. I have tied it and used it in southwest Wisconsin, Arkansas, and on the Bighorn River in Montana with success. I especially like to use the size 12 version as a trailer behind a bigger streamer in larger rivers. Even though it was designed for Brook Trout, it does equally well on Browns and Rainbows. But, what about the story behind the fly?

Many of you know or have run into Royce at fly tying functions. Did you know he was a veteran of World War II's Iwo Jima campaign? His company of 210 landed on the beach in February of 1945 and at the end of the campaign he was one of 35 survivors in his company. Royce says "I can't recall many of the things that went on during the battle and that is a good thing." Every once in a while an image pops into his head, but he can only remember about half of the experience. Royce, 82, also told me that only in the last two years has he been able to talk to his family about his war experience.

I learned of the Golden Squirrel from Royce's book, [The Practical Fly Tier](#), Stackpole Books, 2002, ISBN 0-8117-1027-0. The introduction to the book by Mark Van Patten states: "Royce brings a new look to an ancient art form. He has discovered pragmatic approaches and more efficient ways to achieve fly-tying perfection. Royce has also produced six outstanding DVD's demonstrating his flies and techniques. The DVD's (\$15 per) and an autographed edition of his book can be purchased from Royce by calling 414-476-4599.

The Golden Squirrel is a fast tie. I tie it in sizes 8, 10, 12. What, you don't have any Jungle Cock? There are imitation Jungle Cock nails that you can buy. You can modify a Guinea Hen feather, use a stick-on eye, or paint an eye on the head.

To Royce: Thanks for the Golden Squirrel, for sharing your fly tying knowledge with your book and DVD's, and most important, thanks for putting your life on the line for our country.

### The Golden Squirrel

Hook: 2X long, such as a Mustad 94831 dry fly hook(I use a TMC 5262), size 8, 10, & 12

Thread: Black 6/0

Tail: Red hackle fibers

Body: Flat gold tinsel or mylar

Wing: Hair from the tail of a Red or Fox Squirrel

Cheeks: Jungle Cock or some substitute.



Step 1: Tie in a tail of red hackle fibers.



Step 2: Wrap body with gold tinsel or mylar.



Step 3: Tie in a wing of Red Fox Squirrel Tail.



Step 4: Add two Jungle Cock nails for cheeks.

Now go fish it!

