

# John Nebel's "arf & arf" by John Gremmer

August is time for the Ephoron leukons on our local streams. They appear during the last hours of the day. First, you see one, then two, four, then a blizzard. The hatch brings the fish out and up.

My friend, artist, and guide John Nebel looks forward to this hatch every year. He has developed a highly successful series of forms of a fly he calls "arf & arf" (you know, half and half). Does he mean half nymph and half dun or does he mean half dark and half light? It doesn't matter, both apply---and the fly works.



Ephoron leukon

Those of you who know John, know he does things in a unique way, he definitely belongs to the impressionistic order of fly tiers. Exact materials and preciseness of tie are not of first order to John---it's the look he wants. He looks at his flies through fish eyes. He has fun with his tying!



John Nebel's Outfitting Shop



Nebel at his tying desk.

Recently I visited John Nebel's Stream Dreams Outfitters Shop and coaxed him into posing for a few pictures and tying up a few Ephoron imitations. Below is an article John wrote for the FVTU newsletter on Ephorons. Below are the instructions for tying the "arf & arf".



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## Summer's Snowstorm

by John Nebel (nay-bl)

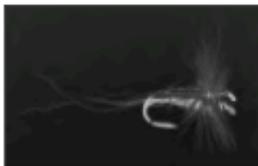
EPHORONS in August and you need no mittens. Finally recovered from night after night chasing HEXs into the WEE hours here now is the most pleasant venue (and family friendly fun) a fly fisher could conjure up.

Placid summer's eve — lazy at 7:15 pm and you are on the Waupaca/Tomorrow — a frenzy of fishing fun ensues and you are DONE — 8:30 quarter to 9 — DONE. This means BBQ with the kids, fishing with high drama, and home with memories for the late show. What a gift. My friend, John Gremmer, reflects on the memories and anticipation of spring hatches re-visited, "Will the hatch come off for me — and all at once you see one — then two — four — six — eight and 100's all over the place." — "A pleasurable evolution" — John calls it.

And fish — a few years back I fished 19 of the first 20 days in August exploring the system from downtown Waupaca to Nelsonville and caught four trout to 44 never skunked in an hour + session. Magical EPHs. And you can too.

Ryan Hagen has pointed out, "It is probably easier to name the streams that do NOT have Ephoron Leukons than do." My 1st sitings were on the Ocontos and I can't think of a stream on which I have not found them. Often you are covered with flies, crawling up your sleeve, enveloping your presence in a most pleasurable camaraderie. After all they have just a few hours of light and flight life as unlike all other mayflies, they emerge, mate, and die in this one evening. Males first appear and swarm often so impatient for their brides, they beleaguer them as they emerge, just breaking the surface film. You will see them trailing the flags of their shucks and often in clusters on the waters as well as hooked up in flight. You are joined by the swooping birds, attack dragonflies and our friends — the bats. These are special evenings and then the inexplicable — all these flies and no fish. Please form your theories and add them to the many that have plagued old hands.

HOWEVER — you often have great fishing. While a #14 white Wulff type fly is solid — my dries include #16's and a #12. Keep the tails (kinky calf tail) long and sparse. Consider a touch of tangerine in the thorax and John Gremmer points out "upon close observation often they are a dirty white."

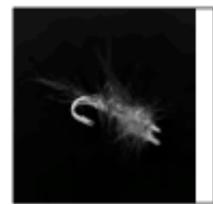


Standard Dry  
(Barreled Wing)

For my wings (of calf body hair) I am just used to "bundling" the tye so the fly can serve flattened as a spinner. Using a #14 (2x) Daiichi

1270 or 1280 hook creates a "double" fly cluster attractor, a stimulator tye with tangerine hint/tint is also effective.

TIP #1 however is to ARF & ARF© your ephorons. Often 80% of my trout come to this emerger tie style (also used for sulphurs & brown drakes). You create a deep emerger 3/4 dark nymph with a busted shuck tail and white soft hackle front presence; add small glass/brass bead head and then tye a mid-range 1/2 & 1/2 version and a top water 2/3 white & dark abdomen version.



Stimulator  
Cluster



Deep

Mid Depth  
Arf & Arf© Examples

Surface

Yes — I could give you more specifics (happy to — just call 722-4004) BUT think this out, visualize what trout key on and improvise with your existing materials and create the bottom to top bugs (refer to photos). You will catch trout.

Consider reviewing TYING EMERGERS by Schollmeyer & Leeson. TU Chapters have this in their libraries, your friends have this excellent resource or be in touch & you can page thru mine.

My friend, Fishin' Jimmy, advises, "Folks who have trouble with this hatch can focus on nymphs — casting to the shores."

A light rod is great this time of year so your 10' 3 wt. gets it's exercise tho any gear can work. You do NOT need long tippetts. Make your tackle as comfortable as those beautiful summer's evenings.

Carry along a few HEX's (just in case), forget about those Isonychias that are out at this time and after your BBQ, take the family along or a friend or two and enjoy sharing the marvel of no mittens and a blizzard in August. Have some fun.

While John encourages folks to tye their own ARF & ARF©, Eph's are available thru his STREAM DREAM'S OUTFITTER shop (since 1982) in Menasha. 920-722-4004 wisjohn@new.rr.com.

This is what a handful of Ephorons looks like.



**Tying the “arf & arf”:** John Nebel’s Ephoron leukon imitation.

**Hook:** Daiichi 1710 or 1720, size 14

**Thread:** 6/0, pale color

**Head:** bead(brass or glass),(size is determined by how far down you want to fish it)

**Shuck/tail:** poly or antron, barbs(barred and dark fringed woodduck, mallard, grouse, etc.)

**Abdomen:** dark poly, marabou, fur or stuff from bench.

**Thorax:** white poly, fur, or fuzz.

**Wing:** This is optional. White poly or hackle material

## Tying the “arf & arf”:

1. Put on the bead head. Bulk up area between bead and eye if needed.



2. Tie in trailing busted shuck/tail material.



3. Fold shuck/tail material from front to back and clip it short.



4. Tie in the abdomen with materials that are rough and dark. See recipe.



5. Tie in the thorax with white poly, fuzz, or fur. Remember this fly is based on “representational impressionism”.



6. Tie in a stub wing(optional) behind the bead.



7. The finished “arf & arf”. John says, “As you catch a few fish, you will find the best way to tie this fly. Be creative with your material selection and procedures”.



John Nebel tying up an “arf & arf”.

Thanks John for taking time to share this fly.

*John Gremmer*