



# Spring Creek Flycraft and Guide Service

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## Fly Tyers Corner June, 2012 Peatridge Hotwire Soft Hackle (modified)

by **Bill Carnazzo**



This fly was featured in the August, 2009 Leader. So why do a re-run? Well, because: (a) I can; but (b) in fact it works so well on the North Yuba River and we have an outing there in June; and (c) I've made a few modifications to the bug and the tying techniques that make it work even better and make it a little easier to tie. The modifications are simple: For materials, I've substituted wood duck flank for the partridge and now use a somewhat different hook; and in the tying instructions, I use a slightly different technique for tying in the soft hackle—one I learned while reading a good book I recently purchased called "*Tying and Fishing Soft Hackle Flies*," by Allan McGee.

The fly's name is not a typo. I named it "Peatridge" because two of the main ingredients are partridge and peacock. The "hotwire" part comes from the type of wire used for the abdomen. I am partial to the soft hackle configuration because it can also serve as a nymph—in effect, because the wire body makes it heavy, it's a soft hackle nymph, a two-for-one fly. The soft, wavy hackle appears to be enticing to fish, especially on the swing when the fly rises up in the water column, making it resemble a swimming nymph on the way to emergence. Of course, all of this is educated guesswork, since I've never had the pleasure of interviewing a trout. Let's face it—a good deal of the art of fly tying is more for the pleasure of the tyer/angler than anything else. That said, once in awhile we do land on a pattern that really does work. It's at that point that we tyers begin to invent reasons why the fly is effective—there's plenty of pontification out there, for sure. But we really don't know what it is that triggers a trout's instinct—and we'll likely never know.

In any event, this month's pattern is one that does indeed entice trout. Why? Quien sabe, but my guess is that it just looks buggy, and has some motion to it. Not very cerebral, but it's the best I can do. The fly can be tied on any standard nymph hook, but I prefer the "scud" type of hook which allows for a more natural shape to the bug.

### Materials

<b>Hook:</b>	Tiemco 2488, sizes 14-18	<b>Ribbing:</b>	None
<b>Thread:</b>	70 denier flat nylon, olive	<b>Legs:</b>	Wood duck flank
<b>Beads:</b>	Small copper bead to match hook size (e.g. 2mm for #16 and smaller)	<b>Wing:</b>	None
<b>Tail:</b>	Wood duck flank	<b>Thorax:</b>	Fine, small peacock herl
<b>Abdomen:</b>	Chartreuse wire, extra small	<b>Weight:</b>	None
		<b>Head:</b>	Thread

### Tying Instructions

1. Crimp the hook barb and place the bead on the hook. Cover the hook shank with a single, flat layer of thread; extend the thread halfway down the bend of the hook. Move the thread back to the rear of the bead.
2. For the tail, cut a small section of well-marked wood duck flank feather barbules. Measure the tail fibers so that they protrude from the rear of the hook approximately 1/8". Tie the bunch in just behind the bead. Hold the bunch up above the hook as you work the thread rearward, ending at mid-bend. This technique will keep the bunch right on top of the hook. Leave the thread at the rear, and clip the excess feather behind the bead.



3. Crimp the hook barb and place the bead on the hook. Cover the hook shank with a single, flat layer of thread; extend the thread halfway down the bend of the hook. Move the thread back to the rear of the bead.



4. Crimp the hook barb and place the bead on the hook. Cover the hook shank with a single, flat layer of thread; extend the thread halfway down the bend of the hook. Move the thread back to the rear of the bead.



5. Crimp the hook barb and place the bead on the hook. Cover the hook shank with a single, flat layer of thread; extend the thread halfway down the bend of the hook. Move the thread back to the rear of the bead.

6. For the tail, cut a small section of well marked wood duck flank feather barbules. Measure the tail fibers so that they protrude from the rear of the hook approximately 1/8". Tie the bunch in just behind the bead. Hold the bunch up above the hook as you work the thread rearward, ending at mid-bend. This technique will keep the bunch right on top of the hook. Leave the thread at the rear, and clip the excess feather behind the bead.

7. At the same point (i.e., at mid-bend) tie in a 4" section of wire for the abdomen, and wrap the thread forward to the back of the bead. making sure that each wrap of thread lies flat in front of the previous wrap in order to avoid build-up of thread which results in a bulky body. Wrap the wire forward in tight turns and tie it off about two hook eyes width behind the bead, thus leaving room for the hackle, the peacock herl, and the head.

8. Cut another bunch of wood duck flank—larger than the tail bunch. Measure it with tips pointing rearward, so that the tips extend about 1/2" beyond the bend of the hook. Reverse the tips and place the barbules on the hook just ahead of where the wire was tied off, with the tips of the feather protruding out over the hook eye and tie in the butts of the barbules using two loose wraps. Slowly pull the thread tight, distributing the hackle evenly around the hook. If it looks too sparse, add another bunch, but don't over-do it. Sparse is good. Leave the tips extending out over the hook eye for now.



9. Cut two pieces of peacock herl from the eye area of the feather; this part of the feather contains colorful, very small barbules. Tie these two pieces in by their tips and take 3 or 4 wraps and tie it off. Clip the excess herl.
10. Sweep the barbules of the wood duck rearward and place a few thread wraps ahead of them so that they remain in that position. Don't attempt to flatten the barbules against the shank; rather, use only enough wraps to make them stand upright with a slight curve to the rear. Whip finish, trim the thread, place a tiny drop of superglue on the end of your bodkin, and cement the thread.

### **Tying Tips**

1. Keep the fly sparse, and avoid a thick body. Mayfly nymphs and uncased caddis larvae are very slender.
2. I like to flatten the part of the wire that will be tied in so as to eliminate excessive bulk when building the body. Use flat-nosed pliers for this purpose.
3. Use your bodkin to apply superglue rather than squeezing a drop from the bottle directly onto the fly. Your placement will be much better.
4. I keep a cloth next to my vise for wiping the bodkin clean after each application of superglue to prevent glue buildup on the needle. If you do get buildup, use a lighter to burn the buildup off.

Now go crank one of these bugs, go fish it... go fish. I live by that simple philosophy.

*Enjoy, and see ya on the creek...!!!*