

Tying Sno-Cone Chironomids

Sunriver Angler's Fly Tying Corner

By: Phil Fischer



As I sit here in my fly tying studio, it is late March and peering out my window I see snowflakes falling in what has seemed like an endless winter. The good news, the snowpack is registering 126% of normal for this season to date. That is a welcome sign for the upcoming trout season after too many dry years recently. With the opening of some of our key lakes about a month away, by far the most important early season hatch are chironomids. These hatch profusely during the first 6-8 weeks of the season and are an important fly to carry during this time.

The early season features very limited bug activity. About the only active insects are midges, or Chironomids. In the mid-day sun these insects are active and a mild weather day can even bring some surface activity. But, for the most part, it is a subsurface game this time of year. In the past few weeks I have been tying up a variety of Chironomid patterns. For this month's fly article, I tied four of my favorite chironomid patterns: Balck and Silver, Black and Red, Olive and Red, and the Chromie. The link below contains the video demonstrating how to tie each of these patterns. Chironomids are amongst the easiest of patterns to tie and are a great starter pattern for beginners. I recently bought some Alec Jackson Crystal Chronomid hooks. They are a curved hook and are a good option. But any curved hook, like a scud hook or similar will suffice. I look for a wide gape and very sharp point, which translates to better hooking qualities. I generally use

painted white brass beads. But in shallower water situations I will use glass beads and in deeper water tungsten beads. For the abdomen of the fly, I like to use thread that is heavier than we typically use for tying small trout flies. It helps save a lot of time in layering the hook and building up the body of the fly. I generally target 140 to 210 denier for the base layer, and 70 denier for ribbing or top layers on the fly. For hook sizes I will go as large as size 10's and as small as size 18's. My eyes are not quite as strong as they once were, so I very rarely tie tiny flies anymore! I have also been using Solerez Bone Dry UV resin on almost all of my Chironomid patterns. It makes the fly realistic and very durable.

Chironomid Pattern Ideas:

Hook: Curved Daiichi Alec Jackson Crystal Chironomid hook in sizes 11-13, Daiichi 1260 or similar in sizes 12-16, or any scud hook like a Tiemco 2457 in sizes 12-18

Bead: White, sized to match hook size. Also try slate, silver and gold colored beads, or glass beads in various colors like red, amber, gunmetal, etc.

Thread: Red, Black, Olive, Gray, Brown, Amber, or Tan in 140 or 210 denier

Tag: Wire, Krystal Flash in Olive or Red, Holographic Red Tinsel

Ribbing: Fine wire in gold, silver, or copper. Flashabou, Krystal Flash, or similar flash materials in red, olive, rust and clear

Coating: Solerez Bone Dry UV resin

Tying instructions and steps are being published in video form, and can be found on the Sunriver Anglers Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SunriverAnglers/>, or at the following YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/KLPE5J0E6nc>

Learn to tie these Chironomid fly patterns and fish them early in the season on our Central Oregon waters. Experiment and develop your own favorite Chironomid color combination. If you have questions or would like additional information about Chironomid patterns, please don't hesitate to email me. Or if you have suggestions on future patterns to feature in this column, I welcome your input. I can be reached at Philfischer@sbcglobal.net.