

Modern Medicine Fly

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The best thing about fly tying is the ability to take a pattern and adapt it to suit both personal taste and more importantly, it's potential.

Everyone knows about the Medicine fly, Hugh Falkus' own adaptation of the age-old 'Teal Blue and Silver'. Both flies can be deadly for our sea trout (or perhaps sea-going browns is a more apt description?) and both are equally deserving of a wee place in the armoury of any self-respecting migrating trout chaser. But, with the addition of new materials all the time, we have the opportunity to alter things a little, and for me, creating a mobile fly based on Falkus' original has proved to be a good move.

I have demonstrated this fly with a body of holographic tinsel - this adds to the overall sparkle and attraction of the fly. However, being a lazy tier, I like to be able to miss out steps and the addition of the silver Patriot double to Partridge's range of salmon hooks allowed me to do just that. Being able to use a silver hook and incorporate this into the dressing increased the attraction of the pattern! You can simply leave the body out altogether and start with the wing.

The Modern Medicine fly has served me well in fresh water, especially during the few times I have ventured out chasing silver after dark. However, it has really produced dividends either directly in the salt (chasing sea trout on the tide is both exciting and more productive than you might think) or in the estuary / lower tidal ends of the river. Fishing these areas often requires you to retrieve the fly, especially at high tide or in the fish holding back eddies and my advice would be to fish it right up to your feet as often sea trout will take in inches of water. It can be explosive, exciting and heart stopping.

Fishing this fly in the salt is simply a case of working through a series of retrieves until you find the right one. Do not think you need to see fish jumping to believe they are there, nor should you be surprised if another species hits the fly. Mackerel and pollock are also fond on this fly, depending on where and how you fish it. Fast strips in open water for mackerel and in the deep rocky places for pollock is the usual rule of thumb. If you are really lucky or in just the right place, sea bass like to take a wee bite at it as well and I have been lucky enough to pick up a couple of these elusive fish from near the mouth of the mighty River Spey.

I have also included a couple of wee variations I call Medicine Fly Numbers 2 and 3, incorporating a little bit of blue / black coloured rabbit (zonker) strip or, to be more accurate, the hair from this as it offers an excellent colour variation to the fly.

The addition of black / silver Freckle Flash as a hackle or an over-wing keeps it a little in the vein of the original Teal, Blue and Silver (though a long way from the traditional) and adds something to its mobility and attraction, as well as being a handy replacement when fish show a preference for something a little smaller.

Hopefully you will have as much fun and good results as I have with these variants of the traditional Medicine Fly - it's certainly been good for me!

Modern Medicine Fly - Dressing

Hook: Partridge Patriot Salmon Double, # 6 to 14 or similar. Choose a silver version of the hook if you prefer not to tie the tinsel body.

Thread: Fire Orange Uni-Thread, 6/0 or similar.

Rib: Medium silver wire.

Body: Medium holographic silver tinsel.

Wing: White Arctic fox.

Over-wing: Pearly Crystal Flash.

Cheeks: Jungle cock.

Hackle: Blue cock saddle.

Head: Fire Orange Uni-Thread, 6/0 or similar covered in Bug-Bond or similar UV-cured resin



- 1 Run thread down the hook shank catching in the wire rib and the tinsel body.



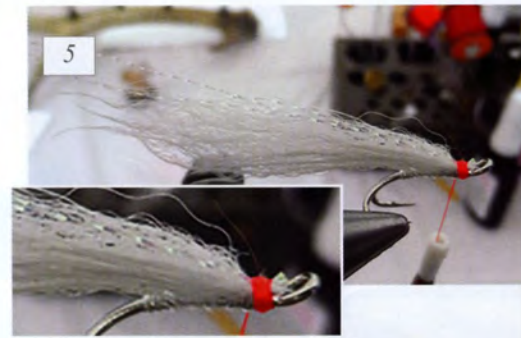
- 2 Run the tinsel up the hook shank to form the body.



- 3 Step 3 Run the wire rib over the body.



- 4 Take a small bunch of Arctic fox fibres to form wing. Keep wing length long for mobility and shape.



- 5 Lay a few strands of pearl Crystal Flash as an over-wing.



- 6 Prepare a pair of jungle cock feathers.



- 7 Tie in the jungle cock, then catch in the blue cock hackle.



- 8 Wind on the hackle and brush back before forming the head and whip finishing.

- 9 Take a small amount of Bug Bond UV varnish.



- 10 Set UV varnish with torch.



The finished
Modern Medicine Fly



Modern Medicine Fly
No. 2

Flies tied and photographed by Allan Liddle.



Modern
Medicine
Fly
No. 3