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The Turkey-Quill Nymph

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THE TURKEY-QUILL NYMPH

The turkey-quill nymph does not belong to that order of semi-divine beings imagined as beautiful maidens inhabiting the sea, rivers, fountains, woods or trees and said to attend upon the superior deities. It is not a young and beautiful maiden, it has nothing to do with the labia minora of the vulva or that genus of aquatic plants which includes the common white or yellow water lily and related species.

The turkey-quill nymph is tied on a size fourteen hook, or a size sixteen when the water is gin clear, of spring steel heavy enough to break the surface tension of the water and sink to the required depth. First, wrap the hook shank with one layer of thread from the eye backwards to the throat. Next, tie in the tail, a few wood duck fibers, and the body composed of one narrow strip of dark turkey primary dressed with five turns of fine brass wire. The shoulder may be tied with two or three turns of peacock and the beard with wood duck, or if you prefer, mallard.

Fish deep, casting as far out as possible, letting the nymph sink to a count of twelve, then work back in cautiously so the curve of the line from rod tip to water is constant.

A strike may come swiftly, burning the line from your fingers, or as a barely perceptible change in the configuration of the line as it lies atop the water in which case raise the rod firmly to set the hook and pray that you've tied all your knots well.

These trout are large, by no means easy to land. But should luck attend you be sure to take no more than you can eat, and put the rest back in the water holding them upright until they swim off on their own power.

Davis Lake, Oregon