



March Fly Of The Month

Pete Narancich

Big Hole Demon

By Todd A. Schotts

For this month's fly pattern I will be bringing you a fly, that doesn't just catch fish all over the world, but it's a fly of beauty, and also comes with a bit of twisted history regarding who created it. The fly I am talking about is the Big Hole Demon (sometimes called Black Hole Demon) created by Pete Narancich.

"Now for, rest of the story..." The history of who created this fly pattern is twisted like a nasty wind knot. Many books and articles mentioned Dan Bailey as the creator of the fly back in the mid '60's. Yet, after researching through more writings on this fly, the actual originator was Pete Narancich. He owned a ranch on the Big Hole River a few miles from the Twin Bridges. The well known and famous fly fisherman Joe Brooks visited his ranch on a regular basis, and the writings said he found out how effective of the Big Hole Demon was. The fly was given to Dan Bailey by Joe Brooks and Dan started offering the fly in two versions. With everyone purchasing these flies, that is probably how the twisted history of the originator came about.

From the books and writings, sources are not really sure exactly what the original patterns looked like, but think they are closest to the photos in the book *Streamers And Bucktails*, by Joseph D. Bates Jr. The photos in there, they think were the first three Big Hole Demons. The original pattern was all black, with a

silver part of the body — this was often referred to as the All Black version. The most well known and popular version has feather from the jungle cock tied splayed as a tail and a badger hackle palmered over the front part of the body. The third version used fox squirrel hair for the tail and grizzly palmered over the front part; this was Pete's favorite fly. All of the original patterns were tied on salmon hooks; I am not exactly sure when the big switch came to wet fly hooks.

For the popularity over the big pond with this fly, you have to give credit to Jan Grunwald, Jens Ploug Hansen, and Harry Nielson from their books and writings that they wrote that made them so popular for Sea Trout. In Jan's book he describes the two colors used — a red and a badger. They describe more colors in his book for winter fishing, such as red & orange and black & white.

When tying this streamer, one major thing to remember is to keep the tinsel flat on the hook, as any little bump will show. The ribbing on the fly is optional as it is spiraled over the tinsel of the fly. If you do not want to use ribbing, then use either a UV Gluing system or Varnishes on the tinsel to secure it. Make sure when wrapping the hackle in the front, the hackle stem lies in the groove in the chenille. With doing the hackle this way it will make it more secure.

When fishing this pattern, the famous Joe Brooks mentions in his writings that, "It is fished across the current and allowed to drift free for several feet, then a slow jerk is given to make it look alive, and make it swim across the current in an tempting manner." Use this fly for Brown Trout, Atlantic Salmon (sea run), Sea Trout (sea run), and Rainbow Trout. I can imagine that either Largemouth or Smallmouth Bass, would devour this fly.

Big Hole Demon



HOOK: Wet Fly Hook, Sizes 2 to 8

THREAD: Black 8/0

TAIL: 2 badger hackle tips

RIB: Small or BR Ultra wire, color to match fly (optional)

REAR BODY: Flat Silver Tinsel

HACKLE: Badger

FRONT BODY: Black Chenille

HEAD: Tying Thread

So if you want to tie an amazing streamer that got its roots in Montana, and has become a world wide pattern, then start your bobbins slinging, because this is your fly. Until next month, Tight Line & Snazzy Flies.