

# Fort Worth Fly Fishers January 2017 Fly of the Month

Ray Bergman "Potter" Wet Fly



The January fly of the month comes from the classic Ray Bergman book "Trout". My copy, which I got used thru Amazon, is one of my most favorite Fly Fishing/Tying books. It's the Third printing and is dated January, 1939. I found it thru the used section of Amazon and it turned out to be a treasure. First of all it had part of the original dust jacket. It also turned out to be an autographed copy, signed by Ray Bergman. Lastly, and maybe the most special part, it had an inscription in the dust jacket from someone who obviously gave the book as a Christmas present in 1939. The inscription includes a poem and read's like this:

Floyd A. Pearce

Fisherman?

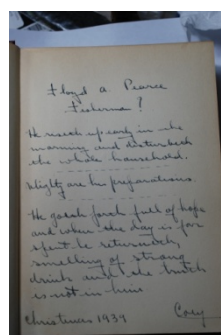
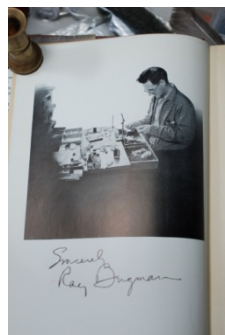
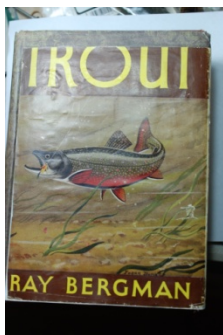
He riseth up early in the morning and disturbeth the whole household.

Mighty are his preparations.

He goeth forth full of hope and when the day is far spent he returneth, smelling of strong drink and the truth is not in him.

Christmas 1939

Cory



I had no idea the book had these hidden treasures (and I'm sure the folks at Amazon didn't either or it would have cost a lot more). The book is a treasure chest of 1930's vintage fly fishing techniques and most important to us tiers, fifteen full color plates with 20 to 50 flies per plate and full descriptions of the recipe's. If you haven't tried fishing by swinging a wet fly, look up the technique and try it, it is deadly effective.

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Recipe (per Bergman)

Body - Blue Green floss

Ribbing - Black Silk

Hackle - Dark Brown

Wing - Slate

Recipe (as tied)

Body - DMC Satin embroidery thread, color 501 (Slate Green)

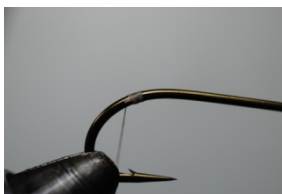
Ribbing - DMC Satin embroidery thread, color 310 (Black)

Hackle - Ring necked pheasant rump feather

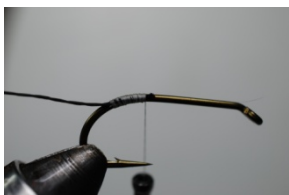
Wing - slip of Widgeon primary feather

Thread - Danville 6/0 flat waxed white (underbody) and black (wing tie in and head)

1). Start the white thread so that your bobbin hangs at the back of the hook barb.



2). Tie in a six inch long piece of black floss (ribbing) so that the tag is toward the hook eye and the long end is back toward the vice (put it up in a material clip if you use one). Traditionally, this is tied in on the back side of the hook (ie 3 o'clock if you were looking at the hook with the eye in front and the hook in back). Clip the tag end off.



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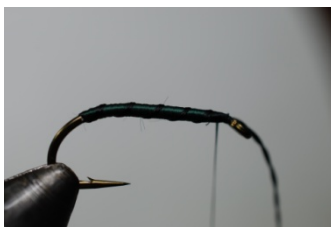
3). Wind the white thread up to the front of the hook and stop one hook eye diameter back from the hook eye, using touching, adjacent wraps. Your thread will tend to cord up as you wrap the body, so occasionally twirl your bobbin to unwind the thread and allow it to go onto the hook as flat as possible. You may choose to wrap several layers and create a slight taper (really a cigar shape) on the hook. The white thread is used to help the floss color when wet (the floss is slightly translucent when wet and the white underbody won't darken the floss like a dark color underbody would). When you have the underbody shape you want, go ahead and attach a piece (about 18 inches long) of the body floss (DMC 501). The embroidery floss comes with six strands. I select one of the six and then if you twist the floss, you'll notice that each of the six strands really are made up of two smaller strands. I further separate the two strands and I am left with a small diameter piece of floss that really winds on flat and mimics silk pretty well. It's not silk floss (silk is more vibrantly colored), but it's a pretty good cheaper alternative while you're learning or for tying fishing flies (vs display flies).



4). Wind the body floss to the rear of the hook (to a point above the back of the barb) and then wind forward back to the tie in point. Keep the floss flat and use adjacent touching wraps to create a very flat, smooth body. Switch to black thread and clip off the white thread.



5). Now wrap the black floss around the body to create a nicely spaced rib. Traditionally there are five wraps that that are used. the rib is wrapped under the hook and then over the top (ie clockwise if you were looking at the front of the hook to the back). Tie off the rib and clip the excess.



6). I have the luxury of also being a bird hunter and so I have access to lots of bird feathers. I happened to have a pair of Widgeon duck wings from last season and thought the primaries would make nice

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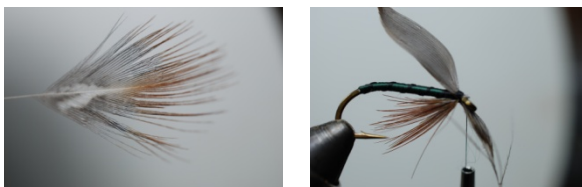
"slate" colored wings. I picked feathers from both the right and left wings to get a nice pair. I then clipped a slip from each feather and matched the tips to prepare them for tying in the wing.



7). Here's the matching (right and left) wing slips tied on to the hook. The techniques for tying in the wings takes some practice and are probably beyond the limits of what I can explain in a short tying tutorial. There are excellent reference materials available, but my best recommendation is come join one of the tying groups mentioned later in the newsletter and ask some of the experienced tiers to show you how to mount wings on flies. The excess wing material will be carefully removed with sharp, fine scissors at this point.



8). The Bergman recipe called for dark brown hackle (more of a throat based on the picture in Bergman's book). I choose to use a ring necked pheasant rump feather (picture below). The throat is tied in by holding the feather under the wing tie in point (may be easier to invert the fly at this point) and putting one or two loose wraps around the feather. Pull the feather forward until the length of the throat is such that the tips of the throat are near (but not past) the hook point. Mine are maybe slightly long on the example. You may need to manipulate the feather to get the throat to angle the way you want. Classic Salmon fly tiers will consider this method of attaching the throat to be cheating. Traditionally, the throat feather would be palmered (ie wrapped) around the hook and then all of the barbs carefully pulled down into the throat position and held in place with thread wraps. Your choice on how to tie it.



9). Clip off the excess throat feather and wrap a small, neat thread head. I've chosen to add a bit of "Kelson's Formula Head Cement" to make a nice glossy head. This is a tar and turpentine based head cement formula made to Kelson's old recipe, available from John McLain at FeathersMC (<http://feathersmc.com/>). This yields the finished fly - Ray Bergman's "Potter":

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