
Fly of the Month: Doug's Stacked Pale Morning Dun

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I have to admit it. I have a favorite fishing place on this planet. I have fished all over (well certainly not as much as Libeu) but yeah, I have fished fresh and salt. Alaska and Mexico. Montana and Christmas Island. Costa Rica and limestone creeks in Pennsylvania. I also have favorite areas: our own Eastern Sierra ranks number Two on my list and the rivers and lakes in the Yellowstone region are ranked number Three. Still sitting out there in the Number One spot is the Green River, Utah!

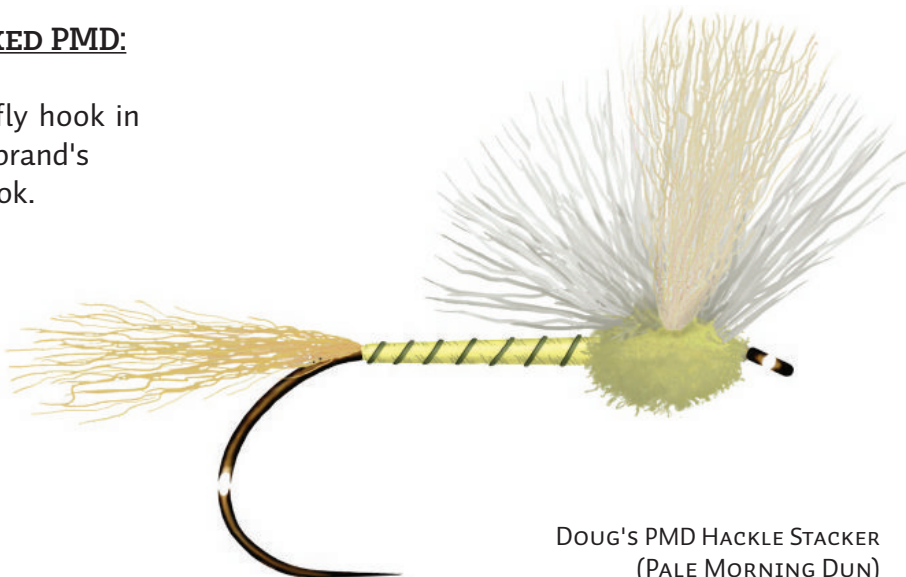
I usually go in the springtime and at that time it's nymphs and a really fun BWO hatch. Nymphs, emergers and dries all day and everyday. Come June and July it becomes Pale Morning Dun season—oh my! Fly size is generally small—anywhere from a #16 down to a size 22 dry. A couple of seasons ago while fishing with my favorite guide on the river, Doug Roberts (owner of Old Moe Guide Service) I fished a Hackle Stacker style fly for the first time in years. It floated, it was very visible and dang, it worked! So here is my turn to share it.

Now I learned how to tie Hackle Stackers 25 years ago from the originator himself, Bob Quigley. I enjoyed tying them for a while because they were a novelty but I was not fishing them as much as I should have back then and their charm wore off. They took more time to tie and I, frankly, didn't see the need. Well I'm back in the hackle stacker fold now. They fish just like a favorite all 'round fly: the Sparkle Dun. The way the hackle lays out around the thorax gives the fly remarkable floatability even in slightly rougher water. Their appearance on the water certainly fools fish with that low profile and the hackle makes a great impressionistic foil of legs vs. wings. Also, I often add a wing to this fly which extends this beyond just a dun pattern but can easily represent a spinner as well.

Of course I have used this pattern very effectively on the Green River but the Big Horn, Madison, Silver Creek, Hot Creek, the Upper and Lower 'O' and a variety of other smaller waters all prove prime waters for its use. Of course, you can also tie this pattern in other mayfly imitations like a Baetis, Trico, Tiny Western Olive, Mahogany Dun and more. But really, the greatest thing about the Doug's Stacked Dun is the danged thing works. Tie up a bunch and take 'em out for a test drive the next time you go fishing.

MATERIALS FOR THE DOUG'S STACKED PMD:

- Hook: Tiemco 9300, 100 or 101 dry fly hook in sizes 16 to 20 or your favorite brand's standard, or 1X heavy dry fly hook.
- Thread: Veevus Light Cahill 12/0.
- Shuck: Gold and Brown Zelon or Darlon; mixed 50:50.
- Body: Tying thread; keep it thin.
- Ribbing: Veevus Dark Olive 12/0.
- Hackle: Light dun or Grizzly Dun.
- Wing: PMD color EP Triggerpoint fibers (optional).
- Thorax: Dun Olive dubbing.
- Head: Light Cahill tying thread.



DOUG'S PMD HACKLE STACKER
(PALE MORNING DUN)

HOW TO TIE DOUG'S STACKED PMD:

1. Place the hook into the vise and attach your thread at the head space and wind down to the end of the shank. Select a small clump of gold and brown Zelon or Darlon and mix them together (I use Darlon because it has a huge range of colors available and is usually straighter and finer textured). Tie in the shuck. The length should be about the length of the body—not including the thorax. I also like to feather and taper the ends of the shuck so it is not cut off straight and flush like a paint brush.
2. Tie in your dark olive thread ribbing, low and on the far side of the hook. Tying it in this location is best for normally wound ribbing, as it will start right at the end of the body without creeping halfway up the near side. For ribbing wound in the reverse direction over dubbing, tie it in low and on the near side of the hook.



DOUG'S BWO HACKLE STACKER
(BLUE-WINGED OLIVE)

3. Smoothly wind your tying thread forward to the thorax creating a slight taper. As you go, counter spin your thread to keep it flat and thereby making a very smooth body. Now wind the ribbing in the normal direction evenly spaced to the thorax and tie off. Pale Morning Duns are thin and delicate looking compared to many other mayflies so keep the profile thin. If you want to use dubbing for the body, keep it very thin!
4. Time to create the hackle stacker... Start by holding the index finger of your "off" hand over the hook shank about four to six inches away. Right at the juncture between the body and thorax, wind your thread up and over the top of your finger and then

one or two times around the hook shank. Now, do this one or two more times until you have two or three four to six inch loops above the hook shank. Make sure all of the loops are the same size or winding the hackle will be a nightmare!!! The turns around the shank will help keep the large loop from being pulled smaller as you create the next large loop. Add a very small amount of thorax dubbing to your thread and wind a small ball right behind the thread loops.



5. Select a nice long hackle (like a Whiting; it will make your life easier...) with the barb length sized for the fly or a half size smaller. Tie in the hackle with the dull side down, leaving about 1/16" of bare stem exposed. Holding the thread loops upright (I usually use my right index finger inside the loops of thread), wind the hackle smoothly up the thread and back down. Make sure that the amount of hackle wound on the thread will reach or be just barely short of



the head space. Lay the remaining hackle over the front side of the shank and tie it off. If needed you can stiffen the thread loops a bit before you wind the hackle by adding the smallest of amounts of a UV curing resin and hitting it with your blacklight. Now while holding the loops upright stroke the barbs firmly getting them to point mostly to the rear of the hook.

6. If you want to add a wing, now is the time. Select a small hank of Triggerpoint fibers (half the diameter of a pencil) and trim off one end straight. With your dominant hand and those butt ends only extending a 1/16" beyond the fingertips push them right up against the hackle stacker and tie the butts down



with the wing material pointing towards the hook eye. Lift up the wing and add a few wraps in front to sort stand them up (the thorax dubbing will do the rest of the work). If you're worried about durability add a very small amount of cyanoacrylate on the underside of the hook where the wing is tied in. Be careful; you don't want a ton of the stuff to wick into the base of the wing or you won't be able to separate them later!

7. Apply the thorax dubbing to your thread and wind the thorax. Start the thorax dubbing by winding between the wing and the hackle loops and then forward to the head space. I actually prefer to keep the dubbing rather loose and spiky. It looks better



makes the fly look more lifelike and also will allow the hackle to settle a little into the thorax rather than sit on top.

8. Use your bodkin to separate the wing into two equal parts. Push one to the far side and the other towards you. Take hold of the thread loops of your hackle, pulling it upright firmly, and with your other hand again stroke the hackle barbs back towards the tail. Don't be too gentle—you want as many of the barbs as possible pulled back and out of the way so they don't get trapped underneath, which will give the fly a messy look. Also, be sure to leave the wing alone. Now pull the thread loops forward between the two wings to the head space. Keeping firm tension but not too much (don't want the thread loops to snap back) wind two or three turns over the loops to tie them down. I also will take the thread loops and wrap them once or twice around my tying thread (tends to lock the thread loops down) and while pulling the loops to the rear form a very small thread head and whip finish. Remove your tying thread and then the loops of thread.
9. Finally, if you have wings on yours, pull them straight back and cut them off even with the bend of the hook. The fly is now done and ready for a test drive at your favorite location. I know where mine would be...