



# Red Tag

This is a very traditional little fly, most famous as a winter pattern for grayling. However, it is actually a very good general pattern, equally useful on rivers and lakes. Although most often used as a dry fly, it can also be tied to be fished wet, the only difference being that a softer-fibre hackle is used. An otherwise sombre-hued fly, what really sets it off is the bright tag of red wool that gives the pattern its name. Tying a wool tail is not difficult; the main thing to watch out for is that the wool doesn't lead to an excessively bulky body. Because the body of the Red Tag is a chunky one of peacock herl, this isn't really an issue. Still, it pays to use the waste end of the wool, tied the length of the hook to form an even underbody.



Brown trout



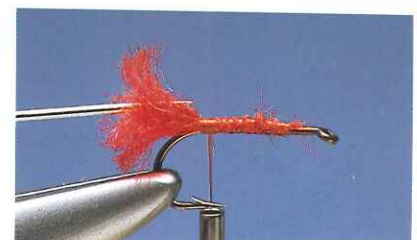
Grayling



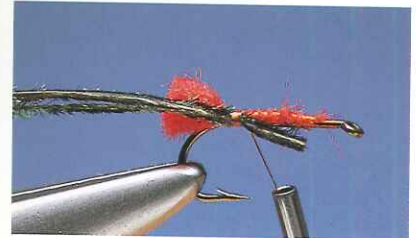
Rainbow trout



**1** With the hook fixed in the vice, run on the tying thread and carry it down the shank in touching turns. Take a short length of red wool and catch it in at a point opposite the barb.



**2** Cover the waste end of the wool with close turns of thread, returning the thread to the bend. This will form an even base for the body. Tease out the wool fibres with the tip of a needle.



**3** Trim the tail short, making a single, clean cut with a pair of scissors. Catch in three strands of peacock herl at the base of the tail.



**4** Carry the tying thread up to the eye. Take hold of the peacock herls and twist them gently. Wind them along the shank to form a chunky body. For added strength, these herls can be wound over a layer of wet varnish.



**5** Secure the herls in place a short distance from the eye and remove the excess.

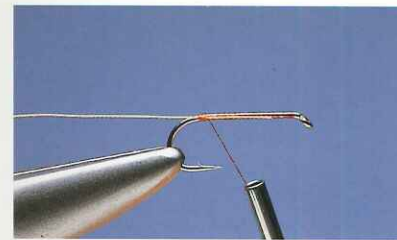


**6** Select a red-brown cock hackle with a fibre length one-and-a-half times that of the hook gape. Catch it in at the eye and wind on three turns. Secure the end and trim the excess, then cast off.

# Elk Hair Caddis

Al Troth developed this superb imitation of an adult caddis fly. Rather than imitating a particular species, it uses the typical roof-wing profile to mimic a whole range of medium to small brown caddis flies. The wing is made from a small bunch of elk hock hair that has been bleached to a light tan. Elk hock is reasonably tough, but still retains some of the buoyancy found in ordinary elk hair. As when tying any hairwing, care must be taken to make the hair secure. Once the body and hackle are in place, the hair is presented to the hook so that the tips project just past the bend. Four tight turns of thread will lock the hair in place, with two or three slightly looser ones used to position the wing low over the body. After the thread is cast off, the excess hair can be trimmed off at the eye.

-  Brown trout
-  Cutthroat
-  Grayling
-  Rainbow trout



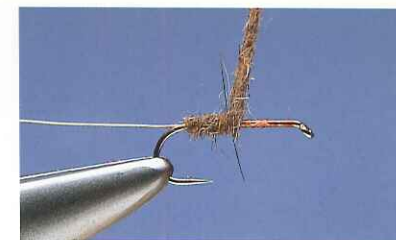
**1** Once the hook is fixed in the vice, run the thread down the shank to a point opposite the barb, using tight, touching turns. Take 5cm (2 inches) of fine, gold wire and catch in place so the waste end lies along the length of the shank.



**3** Select a furnace cock saddle hackle. Prepare it by removing any broken fibres from the base to leave a short stub of bare stem.



**5** Once the hackle has reached the end of the body, take hold of the gold wire and wind it in evenly spaced turns up to the eye. This will hold the hackle turns in place.



**2** Take a pinch of dark hare's fur and apply it to the tying thread. Dub it with finger and thumb to form a thin yarn. Wind the yarn to cover the full length of the hook.



**4** Catch the hackle in at the eye by the section of bare stem. Gently hold the tip with a pair of hackle pliers and begin to wind the hackle in evenly spaced turns.



**6** Secure the wire with thread and remove the excess. Also remove the hackle tip with scissors. Secure a bunch of elk hock hair behind the eye as a wing. Trim the elk hair in front of the eye to leave a short stub, and cast off the thread.

