



Spring Creek Flycraft and Guide Service

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Fly Tyers Corner March, 2012 Bill's Articulated Golden Stonefly

by **Bill Carnazzo**



Last month we featured an updated version of the 12-Step Stonefly. This month we're going to stretch a bit and take on something a bit more challenging—an articulated stonefly nymph. Articulated flies are becoming much more popular. There are even dry fly patterns out there that use an articulated format. We'll try that in a future article. For now, we'll concentrate on subsurface flies.

The interesting thing about articulation is that it can be applied to virtually any nymph or streamer / baitfish pattern, such as a Wiggle Nymph, a Woolly Bugger, or even a Clouser Minnow. I intend to beef up my still water arsenal with a bunch of articulated versions of the usual suspects. How about an articulated Sheep Creek Special? Think

about it and come up with your own ideas. That's part of the fun of fly tying—we don't have to follow someone else's ideas in lock-step fashion.

Often the most effective flies are those that originate in the mind of "Joe Flyfisher" who notices something on the stream, or just plain brainstorms and experiments. The articulation technique will be the same for any fly you choose to transform, but for now let's try it on a stonefly. I've chosen the Golden Stone just because that's a popular spring bug. You can use whatever other colors strike your fancy. We're also going to build this fly as a soft-hackle version. Optionally, use mini size rubber legs instead. The method for attaching the rear hook to the front hook is one that I learned from Kelly Galloup at the tying class on the day after our Granite Bay Flycasters annual dinner. He uses wire to create the attachment for his large flies; for this fly (and probably any small fly) it is probably best to use monofilament.

Materials

Hooks:	Rear: #16; Front: #8—both hooks should be 2xL, w/ bent shank & straight eye	Front Hook Shroud:	Burn orange dubbing or fine hair such as Temple Dog
Thread:	Amber 8/0, or similar thread	Abdomen:	Amber dubbing
Articulating Material:	4x Monofilament	Ribbing:	Fine copper wire
Beads:	Small glass amber beads	Legs:	Dark soft hackle, such as Starling
Tail:	Amber goose biots	Wing Case:	Mottled golden stone color Thin Skin
		Thorax:	Same as abdomen
		Weight:	Optional—not used in instructions

Tying Instructions

1. Smash the hook barbs on both hooks unless you are using barbless hooks. Place the smaller rear hook in the vise. Tie the thread in just above the point of the hook and move the thread forward to near the hook eye, and back to the same point.
2. At that point, tie in the amber biot tail. It should extend to the rear of the body no more than 1/3 of its length.
3. At the same point, tie in a short segment of fine copper wire.



4. Dub the body all the way to the front of the hook, leaving only an eye-width of open shank behind the eye.
5. Rib the abdomen and tie off the wire at the front of the body. Whip finish, and you are done with the rear hook.



6. Cut a 10" piece of monofilament and run one end of it through the eye of the smaller hook. Even up the ends of the mono, and push both ends through two of the amber glass beads. Slide the beads down to the eye of the rear hook.
7. Place the front hook in the vise and cover the shank with thread. Holding the mono tightly with both strands together, tie it in on the far side of the hook making sure that the mono is positioned so that the loop at the rear hook eye is standing straight upward, perpendicular to the eye of the rear hook. This will ensure that the rear hook rides upright.
8. Holding the beads and the rear hook pull on both strands of the mono until the beads rest against the hook bend; they should rest there in a slightly loose manner so that the rear fly can move around in the current. Now wrap tight thread turns back to the bend and leave the thread there.
9. At that point, tie in a piece of fine copper wire, and return the thread to the rear of the hook.
10. Form a small dubbing loop and fill it with some of the burnt orange dubbing. Spin the loop and wind the noodle around the hook, making a small ball about 1/8" in length. Stop there—don't dub any farther forward.
11. Using the amber dubbing, dub the abdomen area of the front hook—meaning from the front of the burnt orange dubbing to a point on the shank that is 1/3 shank length behind the eye and stop there.
12. Tease out the sides of the dubbed abdomen slightly and wrap the copper wire forward in even turns, to the front of the abdomen. Tie off the wire there.
13. Cut a tapered piece of Thin Skin that is approximately 3/16" in width at the widest end, and about 1/2 " long. Pull the material from the backing. You will notice that one side is shinier than the other—you will end up tying it in with the shiny side down (when it's pulled over the top, this will put the shiny side on top). Tie the narrow end of the Thin Skin in at the front of the abdomen and wrap it down rearward over the dubbed abdomen; this step insures that there will be no "gap" between the dubbed abdomen and the thorax. The wide end of the Thin Skin should now be facing rearward.



14. Begin dubbing the thorax area just ahead of where the Thin Skin was tied in. Use up half of the space between the front of the abdomen and the hook eye. At that point, tie in a soft hackle feather such as Starling, in soft hackle style. Take 3 complete wraps of the hackle and tie it off. Now continue dubbing the thorax, using the dubbing material to sweep the hackle slightly rearward. Dub to a point that is about one eye width behind the hook eye—in other words, don't crowd the eye.



15. Grab the Thin Skin and pull it forward over the thorax, stretching it a bit as you do so. Tie it off behind the hook eye. Form a small head and whip finish. Apply a tiny drop of super glue at the head.



Tying Tips

1. Be sure to leave at least 1/3 of the front area of the hook for the thorax. This is true for all nymphs, and is especially essential for the proper construction of this stonefly pattern or any pattern where you are using a wing case.
2. When cutting out your pieces of Thin Skin, give them a slight taper so that when the material is tied in at the rear of the thorax area, the narrower end will end up at the rear of the thorax. This will give the shell back a tapered look, to match the taper of the abdomen.

Admittedly, this sounds complicated, but it really isn't; once you crank a few you'll find that's true. Have fun, and....see ya on the creek.