



## Sparkle Dun Mayfly

### Materials List:

- Hook:** Dai Riki 305, #12 – 20 or any dry fly hook
- Thread:** 8/0 brown, tan, yellow (PMD), olive dun or black
- Tail:** Zelon – mayfly brown, olive brown, dun
- Body:** Superfine dubbing to match insect
- Wing:** Sparkle dun or comparadun deer hair, natural or dun

### Directions:

1. Start thread behind eye of hook and wind halfway down hook shank, then halfway back towards eye. This is the proper tie-in point for deer hair. Placing thread on the hook in this manner prevents deer hair from spinning.
2. Clean and stack a bundle of deer hair. (check Sparkle Dun Deer Hair comments below – using wrong deer hair won't allow hair to flair, the major reason tyers have problems with this fly).
3. Proper wing proportions should be length of hook.
4. Extend tips past hook eye and tie in with two **loose** thread wraps. Pull straight down so deer hair flares. Do not let go of butt ends and wrap 8 – 10 times evenly toward tail to firmly secure hair. Trim or tear butt ends. (If hair rotates around hook shank, use fewer fibers. Very important to wrap on thread base.)
5. Tie in hank of Zelon for tail, matching ends with deer hair to create body taper. I use 1/2 to 1/3 of hank for size 14 and 16.
6. Move thread to back of deer hair.
7. Sweep deer hair backwards to allow hair to stand straight up. Thread should be immediately behind deer hair. Sweep 1/3 of hair back and place 1 thread wrap securely in place by pulling straight down. (you'll see hair stand up). Sweep next 1/3 back and place 1 thread wrap securely in place and pull straight down. Sweep last 1/3 back and place 2 – 3 wraps at base of deer hair. This technique allows minimal thread wraps to stand deer hair up without thread dam.

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8. Wrap thread to hook barb.
9. Attach **THIN** amount of dubbing and wind forward, leaving one thread wrap behind deer hair (if you don't, it will force hair forward). Bring dubbing directly in front of deer hair and begin figure eight wraps around hair. The first wrap behind hair, you'll feel it snug tightly and force hair straight up. Remember, **THIN** dubbing will work better to create tapered body.
10. Whip finish behind hook eye.

The Sparkle Dun Mayfly is a style of fly that can be used for any mayfly. Coordinate the thread and body color.

Other notes:

- To imitate other mayflies, check out the Sparkle Dun fly pattern at <http://www.johnkreft.com/fly-patterns/sparkle-dun-mayfly/>
- Sparkle dun deer hair from [Blue Ribbon Flies](#)
- Zelon – Mayfly brown most common color
- Watch Craig Matthews [tie a PMD Sparkle Dun](#) Mayfly

### **SPARKLE DUN MAYFLY DEER HAIR**

This hair is primarily used for wings on sparkle duns and comparaduns. It is characterized by two things: the hair is hollow down into the tips, and the tips themselves are short and fine. Look for short black tips, which indicates most of hair is hollow. The overall length of the hair can be from one-half inch to over two inches. That isn't important, though many tiers make the mistake of thinking it is. It is the tips of the hair that count; they should be hollow and fine. This allows the hair to flare properly for all sizes of flies, and provides good flotation as well. Sparkle dun deer hair is most commonly whitetail deer from a cold climate, killed in early winter.

For more information about PMDs and their life-cycle, check out my blog – [Pale Morning Duns – PMDs](#).



## RiverKeeper Soft Hackle Cripple

### Materials List:

**Hook:** TMC 102Y #13 – 19 or any standard dry fly hook

**Thread:** 8/0 brown, tan, yellow (PMD), olive dun or black

**Body:** Superfine dubbing to match insect

**Thorax:** Zelon – mayfly brown, olive brown, dun

**Hackle:** Hungarian partridge, mallard

The RiverKeeper Soft Hackle Cripple is a style of fly that can be used for any mayfly cripple. Coordinate the thread and body color.

### Directions:

1. Start thread on hook and advance to barb.
2. Dub slim tapered body forward to a position 2 eye lengths back from eye.
3. Tie in zelon at thorax area. Tie in securely with 5 wraps as zelon is slick. Trim about 1/3 length of body.

4. Prepare a soft hackle feather by pulling off the excess fluff. Feather length should be to the hook point, or slightly longer.
5. Tie the feather in by the tips just behind the eye of the hook.
6. After securing the feather on the hook with the shiny side forward, hold the shaft and bend towards eye of hook. This begins to break the shaft. Hold the shaft up, moisten fingers and squeeze or “fold” the barbules so they are perpendicular to the shaft. This action forces the barbs backwards and prevents over-wrapping of barbs.
7. Wrap the feather forward with a wrap in front of a wrap. Over hackle the fly – a typical soft hackle uses 1 ½ turns of hackle. Use 2 or 3 turns of hackle to complete the fly (larger flies may need 3 to 4 turns).
8. Tie off the thick shaft on the side to fill in the space and create a small head. Trim stem.
9. Sweep hackles backward and add a few thread wraps to make small head.
10. Whip finish.

The challenge in making an effective fly is to find the appropriate hackle for the fly. Early in the fly development, I used Hungarian partridge almost exclusively. Since then, I've experimented with chukar, duck (mallard, green teal), jackdaw, starling, golden plover, or any other upland game bird. Most recently, I've settled on mallard wings for PMDs and Green Drake RiverKeeper Soft Hackle Cripples to match the dun colored wing of the natural.

The number of wraps and stiffness of the feather is what makes the fly float.

Many bird wings have small, useful feathers at the leading edge (covert feathers) or where it connects to body. Preference would be for a feather that has a bit of body that will stand up imitating a dry fly wing.

### **Fishing the fly**

Traditional soft hackles are usually swung as a wet fly. I use it as a “dry fly/cripple” and try to fish it with a dead drift. Get the fly wet and apply Frogs Fanny on it so the fly sits in the film. It looks like a cripple at this point. When brushing on the Frogs Fanny, push the hackle back to get the hackle to stand up. Also apply Frogs Fanny to the body. If it sinks, put on more Frogs Fanny.